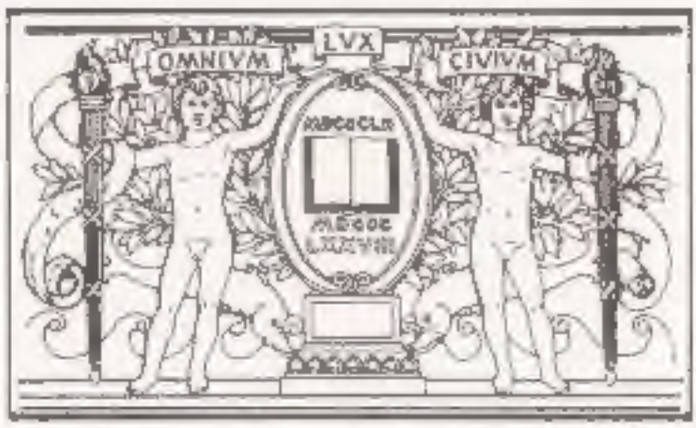

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VOLUME XV

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THE PRISONER'S DREAM

THE STANDARD EDITION
OF THE COMPLETE PSYCHOLOGICAL WORKS OF

SIGMUND FREUD

Translated from the German under the General Editorship of

JAMES STRACHEY

In Collaboration with

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VOLUME XV

(1915–1916)

Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis

(PARTS I and II)

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FRONTISPIECE 'The Prisoner's Dream' by Schwind. (Reproduced by kind permission of the Schack Gallery, Munich.)

INTRODUCTORY LECTURES ON PSYCHO-ANALYSIS (1916–17[1915–17])

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

VORLESUNGEN ZUR EINFÜHRUNG IN DIE PSYCHOANALYSE

(*a*) GERMAN EDITIONS:

1916 Part I (separately), *Die Fehlleistungen.* Leipzig and Vienna: Heller.

1916 Part II (separately), *Der Traum.* Same publishers.

1917 Part III (separately), *Allgemeine Neurosenlehre.* Same publishers.

1917 The above, three parts in one volume. Same publishers. Pp. viii + 545.

1918 2nd ed. (With index and inserted list of 40 corrigenda.) Same publishers. Pp. viii + 553.

1920 3rd ed. (Corrected reprint of above.) Leipzig, Vienna and Zurich: Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag. Pp. viii + 553.

1922 4th ed. (Corrected reprint of above.) Same publishers. Pp. viii + 554. (Also Parts II and III separately, under titles *Vorlesungen über den Traum* and *Allgemeine Neurosenlehre.*)

1922 Pocket ed. (No index.) Same publishers. Pp. iv + 495.

1922 Pocket ed. (2nd ed., corrected and with index.) Same publishers. Pp. iv + 502.

1924 *G.S.*, **7**. Pp. 483.

1926 5th ed. (Reprint of *G.S.*) I.P.V. Pp. 483.

1926 Pocket ed. (3rd ed.) Same publishers.

1930 Small 8vo. ed. I.P.V. Pp. 501.

1933 (By licence.) Berlin: Kiepenheuer. Pp. 524.

1940 *G.W.*, **11**, Pp. 495.

(*b*) ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS:

A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis

1920 New York: Boni & Liveright. Pp. x + 406. (Tr. unspecified; Foreword G. Stanley Hall.)

Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis

1922 London: Allen & Unwin. Pp. 395. (Tr. Joan Riviere, without Freud's preface; with preface by Ernest Jones.)

1929 2nd ed. (revised). Same publishers. Pp. 395.

A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis

1935 New York: Liveright. Pp. 412. (The London ed. under the title of the old New York one. Tr. Joan Riviere; with prefaces by Ernest Jones and G. Stanley Hall. Freud's preface included.)

The present translation is a new one by James Strachey.

This book had a wider circulation than any of Freud's works, except, perhaps, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*.[1] It is also distinguished by the number of misprints in it. As is recorded above, 40 were corrected in the second edition; but there were many more, and a considerable number of slight variations in the text may be observed in the various editions. The present translation follows the text of the *Gesammelte Werke*, which is in fact identical with that of the *Gesammelte Schriften*; and only the more important deviations from earlier versions have been recorded.

The actual date of publication of the three parts is not clear. Part I was certainly out before the end of July, 1916, as is shown by a reference to it in a letter of Freud's to Lou Andreas-Salomé of July 27, 1916 (cf. Freud, 1960). In the same letter he

[1] The *Lectures* were certainly the most translated of any In Freud's lifetime (apart from English) they appeared in Dutch (1917), French (1922), Italian (1922), Russian (1922–3), Spanish (1923), Japanese (1928), Norwegian (1929), Hebrew (1930), Hungarian (1932), Serbo-Croatian (1933), Chinese (1933), Polish (1935) and Czech (1936). They had probably also appeared by then in Portuguese, Swedish, and later in Arabic.

also speaks of Part II as being on the point of appearing. Part III seems to have been published in May, 1917.

The academic year of the University of Vienna fell into two parts: a winter term (or semester) running from October to March, and a summer one from April to July. The lectures printed here were delivered by Freud in two successive winter terms during the first World War: 1915 16 and 1916 17.[1] The fullest account of the circumstances leading to their publication will be found in the second volume of Ernest Jones's biography (1955, 245 ff.).

Although, as Freud himself remarked in his preface to the *New Introductory Lectures*, his membership of the University of Vienna had only been 'a peripheral one', he had nevertheless, from the time of his appointment as Privatdozent (University Lecturer) in 1885 and as Professor Extraordinarius (Assistant Professor) in 1902, given many courses of University lectures. These remained unrecorded, though some accounts of them may be found—for instance, by Hanns Sachs (1945, 39 ff.) and Theodor Reik (1942, 19 ff.), as well as by Ernest Jones (1953, 375 ff.). Freud decided that the series beginning in the autumn of 1915 should be the last, and it was at Otto Rank's suggestion that he agreed upon their publication. In his preface to the *New Introductory Lectures* which has just been quoted Freud tells us that the first half of the present, earlier, series 'were improvised, and written out immediately afterwards' and that 'drafts of the second half were made during the intervening summer vacation, at Salzburg, and delivered word for word in the following winter'. He adds that at that time he 'still possessed a phonographic memory', for, however carefully his lectures might have been prepared, his actual delivery of them was invariably extempore[2] and usually without notes. There is general agreement upon his technique of lecturing: that he was never rhetorical and that his tone was always one of quiet and

[1] The opening lecture of the series was delivered, according to Ernest Jones, on October 23, 1915, but according to a contemporary notice (*Int. Z. Psychoan.*, **3**, 376) on October 16. It is agreed that they were given on Saturdays.

[2] A single exception to this rule is recorded in the case of his Budapest Congress paper (1919a); cf. Jones (1953, 375 n.).

even intimate conversation. But it must not be supposed from this that there was anything slovenly or disordered about his lectures. They almost always had a definite form – a head, body and tail – and might often give the hearer the impression of possessing an aesthetic unity.

It has been said (Reik, 1912, 19) that he disliked lecturing, but it is difficult to reconcile this, not only with the number of lectures he delivered in the course of his life, but with the remarkably high proportion of his actually published work which is in the form of lectures. There is, however, a possible explanation of this inconsistency. Examination shows that among his publications it is predominantly the *expository* works that appear as lectures: for instance, the early lecture on 'The Aetiology of Hysteria' (1896*c*), the somewhat later one 'On Psychotherapy' (1905*a*), as well, of course, as the *Five Lectures* delivered in America (1910*a*) and the present series. But beyond this, when, many years afterwards, he undertook an exposition of the later developments of his views, he, for no obvious reason, once more threw them into lecture form and published his *New Introductory Lectures* (1933*a*), though there was never any possibility of their being delivered as such. Thus lectures as a method of putting forward his opinions evidently appealed to Freud, but only subject to a particular condition: he must be in a lively contact with his real or supposed audience. Readers of the present volume will discover how constantly Freud retains this contact – how regularly he puts objections into his audience's mouth and how frequently there are imaginary arguments between him and his hearers. He in fact carried over this method of stating his case to some of his works which are not lectures at all: the whole of *The Question of Lay Analysis* (1926*e*) and the greater part of *The Future of an Illusion* (1927*c*) take the form of dialogues between the author and a critical listener. Contrary, perhaps, to some mistaken notions, Freud was entirely opposed to laying down his views in an authoritarian and dogmatic fashion: 'I shall not tell it you', he says to his audience at one point below (p. 431), 'but shall insist on your discovering it for yourselves.' Objections were not to be shouted down but brought into the open and examined. And this, after all, was no more than an extension of an essential feature of the technique of psycho-analysis itself.

The *Introductory Lectures* may justly be regarded as a stock-taking of Freud's views and the position of psycho-analysis at the time of the first World War. The secessions of Adler and Jung were already past history, the concept of narcissism was some years old, the epoch-making case history of the 'Wolf Man' had been written (with the exception of two passages) a year before the lectures began, though it was not published till later. So, too, the great series of 'metapsychological' papers on fundamental theory had been finished a few months earlier, though only three had been published. (Two more of them appeared soon after the lectures, but the remaining seven disappeared without leaving a trace.) These latter activities, and no doubt the production of the lectures as well, had been facilitated by the slackening in Freud's clinical work imposed by war conditions. A watershed had apparently been reached and the time seemed to have come for a halt. But in fact fresh creative ideas were in preparation which were to see the light in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920*g*), *Group Psychology* (1921*c*) and *The Ego and the Id* (1923*b*). Indeed, the line must not be drawn too sharply. Already, for instance, hints may be detected of the notion of the 'compulsion to repeat' (p. 274), and the beginnings of the analysis of the ego are quite apparent (pp. 422 and 428), while the difficulties over the multiple senses of the term 'unconscious' (see p. 227*n*. 1) are paving the way towards the new structural account of the mind.

In his preface to these lectures Freud speaks a little depreciatively of the lack of novelty in their contents. But no one, however well-read in psycho-analytic literature, need feel afraid of being bored by them or could fail to find plenty in them that is not to be found elsewhere. The discussions on anxiety (Lecture XXV) and on primal phantasies (Lecture XXIV), which Freud himself singles out in his preface as fresh material, are not the only ones he might have mentioned. The review of symbolism in Lecture X is probably his most complete. Nowhere does he give such a clear summary of the formation of dreams as in the last pages of Lecture XIV. There are no more understanding commentaries on the perversions than those in Lectures XX and XXI. Finally, there is no rival to the analysis of the process of psycho-analytic therapy given in the last lecture of all. And even where the subjects would seem to be

well-worn, such as the mechanism of parapraxes and of dreams, they are approached from unexpected directions and throw fresh illumination on what might have seemed depressingly familiar ground. The *Introductory Lectures* have thoroughly deserved their popularity.[1]

[1] From their very nature these lectures touch upon a large variety of subjects, into some of which Freud (as he himself remarks in the last paragraph of the final lecture) has been unable to enter very deeply. Many readers, and especially students who find in this work their first approach to psycho-analysis, are likely to come upon some point about which they would wish to learn more. An attempt has accordingly been made in the footnotes of this edition to give particularly generous references to others of Freud's writings in which the topic in the text is dealt with at greater length.

PREFACE[1]
[1917]

WHAT I am here offering the public as an 'Introduction to Psycho-Analysis'[2] is not designed to compete in any way with such general accounts of this field of knowledge as are already in existence, e.g. those of Hitschmann (1913), Pfister (1913), Kaplan (1914), Régis and Hesnard (1914), and Meyer (1915). This volume is a faithful reproduction of the lectures which I delivered [at the University] during the two Winter Terms 1915–16 and 1916–17 before an audience of doctors and laymen of both sexes.

Any peculiarities of this book which may strike its readers are accounted for by the conditions in which it originated. It was not possible in my presentation to preserve the unruffled calm of a scientific treatise. On the contrary, the lecturer had to make it his business to prevent his audience's attention from lapsing during a session lasting for almost two hours. The necessities of the moment often made it impossible to avoid repetitions in treating some particular subject—it might emerge once, for instance, in connection with dream-interpretation and then again later on in connection with the problems of the neuroses. As a result, too, of the way in which the material was arranged, some important topics (the unconscious, for instance) could not be exhaustively treated at a single point, but had to be taken up repeatedly and then dropped again until a fresh opportunity arose for adding some further information about it.

Those who are familiar with psycho-analytic literature will find little in this 'Introduction' that could not have been known to them already from other much more detailed publications. Nevertheless, the need for rounding-off and summarizing the subject-matter has compelled the author at certain points (the

[1] [This Preface was omitted from the 1922 English translation and its re-issues.]

[2] [A literal translation of the German title of the book would be 'Lectures to Serve as an Introduction to Psycho-Analysis'.]

aetiology of anxiety and hysterical phantasies) to bring forward material that he has hitherto held back.

FREUD

VIENNA, *Spring* 1917

PREFACE TO THE HEBREW TRANSLATION[1]
[1930]

THESE lectures were delivered in 1916 and 1917; they gave a fairly accurate account of the position of the young science at that period and they contained more than their title indicated. They provided not only an introduction to psycho-analysis but covered the greater part of its subject-matter. This is naturally no longer true. Advances have in the meantime taken place in its theory and important additions have been made to it, such as the division of the personality into an ego, a super-ego and an id, a radical alteration in the theory of the instincts, and discoveries concerning the origin of conscience and the sense of guilt. These lectures have thus become to a large extent incomplete; it is in fact only now that they have become truly 'introductory'. But in another sense, even to-day they have not been superseded or become obsolete. What they contain is still believed and taught, apart from a few modifications, in psycho-analytic training schools.

Readers of Hebrew and especially young people eager for knowledge are presented in this volume with psycho-analysis clothed in the ancient language which has been awakened to a new life by the will of the Jewish people. The author can well picture the problem which this has set its translator. Nor need he suppress his doubt whether Moses and the Prophets would have found these Hebrew lectures intelligible. But he begs their descendants (among whom he himself is numbered), for whom this book is designed, not to react too quickly to their first impulses of criticism and dislike by rejecting it. Psycho-analysis brings forward so much that is new, and among it so much that contradicts traditional opinions and wounds deeply-rooted feelings, that it is bound at first to provoke denial. A

[1] [This preface was first published in German in *G.S.*, **12** (1934), 383-4, and reprinted in *G.W.*, **16** (1950), 274-5. It is here translated into English for the first time by James Strachey. The Hebrew translation was published by the Verlag Stybel in Jerusalem in 1933.]

reader who suspends his judgement and allows psycho-analysis as a whole to make its impression on him will perhaps become open to a conviction that even this undesired novelty is worth knowing and is indispensable for anyone who wishes to understand the mind and human life.

VIENNA, *December* 1930

PART I

PARAPRAXES

(1916 [1915])

LECTURE I

INTRODUCTION

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I cannot tell how much knowledge about psycho-analysis each one of you has already acquired from what you have read or from hearsay. But the wording of my prospectus—'Elementary Introduction to Psycho-Analysis'—obliges me to treat you as though you knew nothing and stood in need of some preliminary information.

I can, however, assume this much—that you know that psycho-analysis is a procedure for the medical treatment of neurotic patients. And here I can at once give you an instance of how in this field a number of things take place in a different way—often, indeed, in an opposite way—from what they do elsewhere in medical practice. When elsewhere we introduce a patient to a medical technique which is new to him, we usually minimize its inconveniences and give him confident assurances of the success of the treatment. I think we are justified in this, since by doing so we are increasing the probability of success. But when we take a neurotic patient into psycho-analytic treatment, we act differently. We point out the difficulties of the method to him, its long duration, the efforts and sacrifices it calls for; and as regards its success, we tell him we cannot promise it with certainty, that it depends on his own conduct, his understanding, his adaptability and his perseverance. We have good reasons, of course, for such apparently wrong-headed behaviour, as you will perhaps come to appreciate later on.

Do not be annoyed, then, if I begin by treating you in the same way as these neurotic patients. I seriously advise you not to join my audience a second time. To support this advice, I will explain to you how incomplete any instruction in psycho-analysis must necessarily be and what difficulties stand in the way of your forming a judgement of your own upon it. I will show you how the whole trend of your previous education and all your habits of thought are inevitably bound to make you into opponents of psycho-analysis, and how much you would

have to overcome in yourselves in order to get the better of this instinctive opposition. I cannot, of course, foretell how much understanding of psycho-analysis you will obtain from the information I give you, but I can promise you this: that by listening to it you will not have learnt how to set about a psycho-analytic investigation or how to carry a treatment through. If, however, there should actually turn out to be one of you who did not feel satisfied by a fleeting acquaintance with psycho-analysis but was inclined to enter into a permanent relationship to it, I should not merely dissuade him from doing so but actively warn him against it. As things stand at present, such a choice of profession would ruin any chance he might have of success at a University, and, if he started in life as a practising physician, he would find himself in a society which did not understand his efforts, which regarded him with distrust and hostility, and unleashed upon him all the evil spirits lurking within it. And the phenomena accompanying the war that is now raging in Europe will perhaps give you some notion of what legions of these evil spirits there may be.

Nevertheless, there are quite a number of people for whom, in spite of these inconveniences, something that promises to bring them a fresh piece of knowledge still has its attraction. If a few of you should be of this sort and in spite of my warnings appear here again for my next lecture, you will be welcome. All of you, however, have a right to learn the nature of the difficulties of psycho-analysis to which I have alluded.

I will begin with those connected with instruction, with training in psycho-analysis. In medical training you are accustomed to *see* things. You see an anatomical preparation, the precipitate of a chemical reaction, the shortening of a muscle as a result of the stimulation of its nerves. Later on, patients are demonstrated before your senses – the symptoms of their illness, the products of the pathological process and even in many cases the agent of the disease in isolation. In the surgical departments you are witnesses of the active measures taken to bring help to patients, and you may yourselves attempt to put them into effect. Even in psychiatry the demonstration of patients with their altered facial expressions, their mode of speech and their behaviour, affords you plenty of observations which leave a

deep impression on you. Thus a medical teacher plays in the main the part of a leader and interpreter who accompanies you through a museum, while you gain a direct contact with the objects exhibited and feel yourselves convinced of the existence of the new facts through your own perception.

In psycho-analysis, alas, everything is different. Nothing takes place in a psycho-analytic treatment but an interchange of words between the patient and the analyst. The patient talks, tells of his past experiences and present impressions, complains, confesses to his wishes and his emotional impulses. The doctor listens, tries to direct the patient's processes of thought, exhorts, forces his attention in certain directions, gives him explanations and observes the reactions of understanding or rejection which he in this way provokes in him. The uninstructed relatives of our patients, who are only impressed by visible and tangible things—preferably by actions of the sort that are to be witnessed at the cinema—never fail to express their doubts whether 'anything can be done about the illness by mere talking'. That, of course, is both a short-sighted and an inconsistent line of thought. These are the same people who are so certain that patients are 'simply imagining' their symptoms. Words were originally magic and to this day words have retained much of their ancient magical power. By words one person can make another blissfully happy or drive him to despair, by words the teacher conveys his knowledge to his pupils, by words the orator carries his audience with him and determines their judgements and decisions. Words provoke affects and are in general the means of mutual influence among men. Thus we shall not depreciate the use of words in psychotherapy and we shall be pleased if we can listen to the words that pass between the analyst and his patient.[1]

But we cannot do that either. The talk of which psychoanalytic treatment consists brooks no listener; it cannot be demonstrated. A neurasthenic or hysterical patient can of course, like any other, be introduced to students in a psychiatric lecture. He will give an account of his complaints and symptoms, but of nothing else. The information required by analysis will be given by him only on condition of his having a special

[1] [Cf. a parallel passage near the beginning of *The Question of Lay Analysis* (1926e), *Standard Ed.*, 20, 187-8.]

emotional attachment to the doctor; he would become silent as soon as he observed a single witness to whom he felt indifferent. For this information concerns what is most intimate in his mental life, everything that, as a socially independent person, he must conceal from other people, and, beyond that, everything that, as a homogeneous personality, he will not admit to himself.

Thus you cannot be present as an audience at a psycho-analytic treatment. You can only be told about it; and, in the strictest sense of the word, it is only by hearsay that you will get to know psycho-analysis. As a result of receiving your instruction at second hand, as it were, you find yourselves under quite unusual conditions for forming a judgement. That will obviously depend for the most part on how much credence you can give to your informant.

Let us assume for a moment that you were attending a lecture not on psychiatry but on history, and that the lecturer was telling you of the life and military deeds of Alexander the Great. What grounds would you have for believing in the truth of what he reported? At a first glance the position would seem to be even more unfavourable than in the case of psycho-analysis, for the Professor of History no more took part in Alexander's campaigns than you did. The psycho-analyst does at least report things in which he himself played a part. But in due course we come to the things that confirm what the historian has told you. He could refer you to the reports given by ancient writers, who were either themselves contemporary with the events under question or, at any rate, were comparatively close to them—he could refer you, that is to say, to the works of Diodorus, Plutarch, Arrian, and so on. He could put reproductions before you of coins and statues of the king which have survived and he could hand round to you a photograph of the Pompeian mosaic of the battle of Issus. Strictly speaking, however, all these documents only prove that earlier generations already believed in Alexander's existence and in the reality of his deeds, and your criticism might start afresh at that point. You would then discover that not all that has been reported about Alexander deserves credence or can be confirmed in its details; but nevertheless I cannot think that you would leave the lecture-room in doubts of the reality of Alexander the Great. Your decision

would be determined essentially by two considerations: first, that the lecturer had no conceivable motive for assuring you of the reality of something he himself did not think real, and secondly, that all the available history books describe the events in approximately similar terms. If you went on to examine the older sources, you would take the same factors into account—the possible motives of the informants and the conformity of the witnesses to one another. The outcome of your examination would undoubtedly be reassuring in the case of Alexander, but would probably be different where figures such as Moses or Nimrod were concerned. Later opportunities will bring to light clearly enough what doubts you may feel about the credibility of your psycho-analytic informant.

But you will have a right to ask another question. If there is no objective verification of psycho-analysis, and no possibility of demonstrating it, how can one learn psycho-analysis at all, and convince oneself of the truth of its assertions? It is true that psycho-analysis cannot easily be learnt and there are not many people who have learnt it properly. But of course there is a practicable method none the less. One learns psycho-analysis on oneself, by studying one's own personality. This is not quite the same thing as what is called self-observation, but it can, if necessary, be subsumed under it. There are a whole number of very common and generally familiar mental phenomena which, after a little instruction in technique, can be made the subject of analysis upon oneself. In that way one acquires the desired sense of conviction of the reality of the processes described by analysis and of the correctness of its views. Nevertheless, there are definite limits to progress by this method. One advances much further if one is analysed oneself by a practised analyst and experiences the effects of analysis on one's own self, making use of the opportunity of picking up the subtler technique of the process from one's analyst. This excellent method is, of course, applicable only to a single person and never to a whole lecture-room of students together.

Psycho-analysis is not to be blamed for a second difficulty in your relation to it; I must make you yourselves responsible for it, Ladies and Gentlemen, at least in so far as you have been students of medicine. Your earlier education has given a

particular direction to your thinking, which leads far away from psycho-analysis. You have been trained to find an anatomical basis for the functions of the organism and their disorders, to explain them chemically and physically and to view them biologically. But no portion of your interest has been directed to psychical life, in which, after all, the achievement of this marvellously complex organism reaches its peak. For that reason psychological modes of thought have remained foreign to you. You have grown accustomed to regarding them with suspicion, to denying them the attribute of being scientific, and to handing them over to laymen, poets, natural philosophers[1] and mystics. This limitation is without doubt detrimental to your medical activity, since, as is the rule in all human relationships, your patients will begin by presenting you with their mental *façade*, and I fear that you will be obliged as a punishment to leave a part of the therapeutic influence you[2] are seeking to the lay practitioners, nature curers and mystics whom you so much despise.

I am not unaware of the excuse that we have to accept for this defect in your education. No philosophical auxiliary science exists which could be made of service for your medical purposes. Neither speculative philosophy, nor descriptive psychology, nor what is called experimental psychology (which is closely allied to the physiology of the sense-organs), as they are taught in the Universities, are in a position to tell you anything serviceable of the relation between body and mind or to provide you with the key to an understanding of possible disturbances of the mental functions. It is true that psychiatry, as a part of medicine, sets about describing the mental disorders it observes and collecting them into clinical entities; but at favourable moments the psychiatrists themselves have doubts of whether their purely descriptive hypotheses deserve the name of a science. Nothing is known of the origin, the mechanism or the mutual relations of the symptoms of which these clinical entities are composed; there are either *no* observable changes in the anatomical organ

[1] [In the sense of followers of Schelling's pantheistic 'philosophy of nature', which prevailed in Germany during the earlier part of the nineteenth century.]

[2] ['*Sie* (you)' in the earlier German editions; '*sie* (they)' in *G.S.* and *G.W.*]

of the mind to correspond to them, or changes which throw no light upon them. These mental disorders are only accessible to therapeutic influence when they can be recognized as subsidiary effects of what is otherwise an organic illness.

This is the gap which psycho-analysis seeks to fill. It tries to give psychiatry its missing psychological foundation. It hopes to discover the common ground on the basis of which the convergence of physical and mental disorder will become intelligible. With this aim in view, psycho-analysis must keep itself free from any hypothesis that is alien to it, whether of an anatomical, chemical or physiological kind, and must operate entirely with purely psychological auxiliary ideas; and for that very reason, I fear, it will seem strange to you to begin with.

I shall not hold you, your education or your attitude of mind responsible for the next difficulty. Two of the hypotheses of psycho-analysis are an insult to the entire world and have earned its dislike. One of them offends against an intellectual prejudice, the other against an aesthetic and moral one. We must not be too contemptuous of these prejudices; they are powerful things, precipitates of human developments that were useful and indeed essential. They are kept in existence by emotional forces and the struggle against them is hard.

The first of these unpopular assertions made by psycho-analysis declares that mental processes are in themselves unconscious and that of all mental life it is only certain individual acts and portions that are conscious.[1] You know that on the contrary we are in the habit of identifying what is psychical with what is conscious. We look upon consciousness as nothing more nor less than the *defining* characteristic of the psychical, and psychology as the study of the contents of consciousness. Indeed it seems to us so much a matter of course to equate them in this way that any contradiction of the idea strikes us as obvious non-

[1] ['*Unbewusst*' and '*bewusst*'. It should be realized from the first that in German these words have a passive grammatical form and, generally speaking, a passive sense. In English 'conscious' and 'unconscious' *may* be used passively but as often as not are used *actively*: 'I am conscious of a pain in my toe' or 'he was unconscious of his hatred'. The German usage would rather speak of the *pain* as conscious and the *hatred* unconscious, and this is the usage adopted regularly by Freud.]

sense. Yet psycho-analysis cannot avoid raising this contradiction; it cannot accept the identity of the conscious and the mental.[1] It defines what is mental as processes such as feeling, thinking and willing, and it is obliged to maintain that there is unconscious thinking and unapprehended willing. In saying this it has from the start frivolously forfeited the sympathy of every friend of sober scientific thought, and laid itself open to the suspicion of being a fantastic esoteric doctrine eager to make mysteries and fish in troubled waters. But you, Ladies and Gentlemen, naturally cannot understand as yet what right I have to describe as a prejudice a statement of so abstract a nature as 'what is mental is conscious'. Nor can you guess what development can have led to a denial of the unconscious—should such a thing exist—and what advantage there may have been in that denial. The question whether we are to make the psychical coincide with the conscious or make it extend further sounds like an empty dispute about words; yet I can assure you that the hypothesis of there being unconscious mental processes paves the way to a decisive new orientation in the world and in science.

You cannot have any notion, either, of what an intimate connection there is between this first piece of audacity on the part of psycho-analysis and the second one, which I must now tell you of. This second thesis, which psycho-analysis puts forward as one of its findings, is an assertion that instinctual impulses which can only be described as sexual, both in the narrower and wider sense of the word, play an extremely large and never hitherto appreciated part in the causation of nervous and mental diseases. It asserts further that these same sexual impulses also make contributions that must not be underestimated to the highest cultural, artistic and social creations of the human spirit.[2]

In my experience antipathy to this outcome of psycho-analytic research is the most important source of resistance which it has met with. Would you like to hear how we explain that fact? We believe that civilization has been created under the pressure of the exigencies of life at the cost of satisfaction of

[1] [The first section of Freud's paper on 'The Unconscious' (1915*e*), *Standard Ed.*, **14**, 166 ff., discusses this question at great length.]

[2] [The sexual instincts form the topic of Lecture XX.]

the instincts; and we believe that civilization is to a large extent being constantly created anew, since each individual who makes a fresh entry into human society repeats this sacrifice of instinctual satisfaction for the benefit of the whole community. Among the instinctual forces which are put to this use the sexual impulses play an important part, in this process they are sublimated — that is to say, they are diverted from their sexual aims and directed to others that are socially higher and no longer sexual. But this arrangement is unstable; the sexual instincts are imperfectly tamed, and, in the case of every individual who is supposed to join in the work of civilization, there is a risk that his sexual instincts may refuse to be put to that use. Society believes that no greater threat to its civilization could arise than if the sexual instincts were to be liberated and returned to their original aims.[1] For this reason society does not wish to be reminded of this precarious portion of its foundations. It has no interest in the recognition of the strength of the sexual instincts or in the demonstration of the importance of sexual life to the individual. On the contrary, with an educational aim in view, it has set about diverting attention from that whole field of ideas. That is why it will not tolerate this outcome of psycho-analytic research and far prefers to stamp it as something aesthetically repulsive and morally reprehensible, or as something dangerous. But objections of this sort are ineffective against what claims to be an objective outcome of a piece of scientific work; if the contradiction is to come into the open it must be restated in intellectual terms. Now it is inherent in human nature to have an inclination to consider a thing untrue if one does not like it, and after that it is easy to find arguments against it. Thus society makes what is disagreeable into what is untrue. It disputes the truths of psycho-analysis with logical and factual arguments; but these arise from emotional sources and it maintains these objections as prejudices, against every attempt to counter them.

We, however, Ladies and Gentlemen, can claim that in asserting this controversial thesis we have had no tendentious aim in view. We have merely wished to give expression to a

[1] [The antagonism between civilization and the instinctual forces received its fullest treatment by Freud in *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930*a*).]

matter of fact which we believe we have established by our painstaking labours. We claim, too, the right to reject without qualification any interference by practical considerations in scientific work, even before we have enquired whether the fear which seeks to impose these considerations on us is justified or not.

Such, then, are a few of the difficulties that stand in the way of your interest in psycho-analysis. They are perhaps more than enough for a start. But if you are able to overcome the impression they make on you, we will proceed.

LECTURE II

PARAPRAXES

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—We will not start with postulates but with an investigation. Let us choose as its subject certain phenomena which are very common and very familiar but which have been very little examined, and which, since they can be observed in any healthy person, have nothing to do with illnesses. They are what are known as 'parapraxes',[1] to which everyone is liable. It may happen, for instance, that a person who intends to say something may use another word instead (a *slip of the tongue* [*Versprechen*]), or he may do the same thing in writing, and may or may not notice what he has done. Or a person may read something, whether in print or manuscript, different from what is actually before his eyes—a *misreading* [*Verlesen*], or he may hear wrongly something that has been said to him—a *mishearing* [*Verhören*]—on the assumption, of course, that there is no organic disturbance of his powers of hearing. Another group of these phenomena has as its basis *forgetting* [*Vergessen*]—not, however, a permanent forgetting but only a temporary one. Thus a person may be unable to get hold of a *name* which he nevertheless knows and which he recognizes at once, or he may forget to carry out an *intention*, though he remembers it later and has thus only forgotten it at that particular moment. In a third group the temporary character is absent—for instance in the case of *mislaying* [*Verlegen*], when a person has put something somewhere and cannot find it again

[1] ['*Fehlleistungen*', literally 'faulty acts' or 'faulty functions'. The general concept did not exist before Freud, and an English term was invented for its translation. The whole of *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901*b*) is devoted to a discussion of them. Freud often used them in his didactic writings (as he does here) as the most suitable material for an introduction to his theories. They were, indeed, among the earliest subjects of his own psychological investigations. Some account of the history of his interest in them will be found in the Editor's Introduction to the sixth volume of the *Standard Edition*. Since there will be a large number of references to that work in the present lectures, the abbreviation '*P.E.L.*' will be used here in order to economize space. The page references in all such cases will be to *Standard Ed.*, 6.]

or in the precisely analogous case of *losing* [*Verlieren*]. Here we have a forgetting which we treat differently from other kinds of forgetting, one at which we are surprised or annoyed instead of finding it understandable. In addition to all this there are particular sorts of *errors* [*Irrtumer*], in which the temporary character is present once more, for in their instance we believe for a time that something is the case which both before and afterwards we know is not so. And there are a number of other similar phenomena known by various names.

All these are occurrences whose internal affinity with one another is expressed in the fact that [in German] they begin with the syllable '*ver*'.[1] They are almost all of an unimportant kind, most of them are very transitory, and they are without much significance in human life. Only rarely does one of them, such as losing an object, attain some degree of practical importance. For that reason, too, they attract little attention, give rise to no more than feeble emotions, and so on.

It is to these phenomena, then, that I now propose to draw your attention. But you will protest with some annoyance: 'There are so many vast problems in the wide[2] universe, as well as within the narrower confines of our minds, so many marvels in the field of mental disorders, which require and deserve to have light thrown upon them, that it does really seem gratuitous to waste labour and interest on such trivialities. If you could make us understand why a person with sound eyes and ears can see and hear in broad daylight things that are not there, why another person suddenly thinks he is being persecuted by the people of whom he has hitherto been most fond, or puts forward the cleverest arguments in support of delusional beliefs which any child could see were nonsensical, then we should have some opinion of psycho-analysis. But if it can do no more than ask us to consider why a speaker at a banquet uses one word instead of another or why a housewife has mislaid her keys, and similar futilities, then we shall know how to put our time and interest to better uses.'

I should reply: Patience, Ladies and Gentlemen! I think your criticism has gone astray. It is true that psycho-analysis cannot

[1] [The English syllable 'mis' has a similar sense.]

[2] [In the editions from 1922 onwards this word is omitted.]

boast that it has never concerned itself with trivialities. On the contrary, the material for its observations is usually provided by the inconsiderable events which have been put aside by the other sciences as being too unimportant – the dregs, one might say, of the world of phenomena. But are you not making a confusion in your criticism between the vastness of the problems and the conspicuousness of what points to them? Are there not very important things which can only reveal themselves, under certain conditions and at certain times, by quite feeble indications? I should find no difficulty in giving you several examples of such situations. If you are a young man, for instance, will it not be from small pointers that you will conclude that you have won a girl's favour? Would you wait for an express declaration of love or a passionate embrace? Or would not a glance, scarcely noticed by other people, be enough? a slight movement, the lengthening by a second of the pressure of a hand? And if you were a detective engaged in tracing a murder, would you expect to find that the murderer had left his photograph behind at the place of the crime, with his address attached? or would you not necessarily have to be satisfied with comparatively slight and obscure traces of the person you were in search of? So do not let us under-estimate small indications, by their help we may succeed in getting on the track of something bigger. Furthermore, I think like you that the great problems of the universe and of science have the first claim on our interest. But it is as a rule of very little use to form an express intention of devoting oneself to research into this or that great problem. One is then often at a loss to know the first step to take. It is more promising in scientific work to attack whatever is immediately before one and offers an opportunity for research. If one does so really thoroughly and without prejudice or preconception, and if one has luck, then, since everything is related to everything, including small things to great, one may gain access even from such unpretentious work to a study of the great problems. That is what I should say in order to retain your interest, when we deal with such apparent trivialities as the parapraxes of healthy people.

Let us now call in someone who knows nothing of psychoanalysis, and ask him how he explains such occurrences. His

first reply will certainly be, 'Oh! that's not worth explaining: they're just small chance events.' What does the fellow mean by this? Is he maintaining that there are occurrences, however small, which drop out of the universal concatenation of events — occurrences which might just as well not happen as happen? If anyone makes a breach of this kind in the determinism of natural events at a single point, it means that he has thrown overboard the whole *Weltanschauung* of science. Even the *Weltanschauung* of religion, we may remind him, behaves much more consistently, since it gives an explicit assurance that no sparrow falls from the roof without God's special will. I think our friend will hesitate to draw the logical conclusion from his first reply; he will change his mind and say that after all when he comes to study these things he can find explanations of them. What is in question are small failures of functioning, imperfections in mental activity, whose determinants can be assigned. A man who can usually speak correctly may make a slip of the tongue (1) if he is slightly indisposed and tired, (2) if he is excited and (3) if he is too much occupied with other things. It is easy to confirm these statements. Slips of the tongue do really occur with particular frequency when one is tired, has a headache or is threatened with migraine. In the same circumstances proper names are easily forgotten. Some people are accustomed to recognize the approach of an attack of migraine when proper names escape them in this way.[1] When we are excited, too, we often make mistakes over words — and over *things* as well, and a 'bungled action' follows. Intentions are forgotten and a quantity of other undesigned actions become noticeable if we are absent-minded — that is, properly speaking, if we are concentrated on something else. A familiar example of this absent-mindedness is the Professor in *Fliegende Blätter*[2] who leaves his umbrella behind and takes the wrong hat because he is thinking about the problems he is going to deal with in his next book. All of us can recall from our own experience instances of how we can forget intentions we have formed and promises we have made because in the meantime we have had some absorbing experience.

This sounds quite reasonable and seems safe from contradic-

[1] [This was a personal experience of Freud's. *P.E.L.*, 21.]

[2] [The comic weekly.]

tion, though it may not be very interesting, perhaps, and not what we expected. Let us look at these explanations of parapraxes more closely. The alleged preconditions for the occurrence of these phenomena are not all of the same kind. Being ill and disturbances of the circulation provide a physiological reason for the impairment of normal functioning; excitement, fatigue and distraction are factors of another sort, which might be described as psycho-physiological. These last admit of easy translation into theory. Both fatigue and distraction, and perhaps also general excitement, bring about a division of attention which may result in insufficient attention being directed to the function in question. If so, the function can be disturbed with especial ease, or carried out inaccurately. Slight illness or changes in the blood-supply to the central nervous organ can have the same effect, by influencing the determining factor, the division of attention, in a similar manner. In all these cases, therefore, it would be a question of the effects of a disturbance of attention, whether from organic or psychical causes.

This does not appear to promise much for our psychoanalytic interest. We might feel tempted to drop the subject. If, however, we examine the observations more closely, what we find does not tally entirely with this attention theory of parapraxes, or at least does not follow from it naturally. We discover that parapraxes of this kind and forgetting of this kind occur in people who are *not* fatigued or absent-minded or excited, but who are in all respects in their normal state — unless we choose to ascribe *ex post facto* to the people concerned, purely on account of their parapraxis, an excitement which, however, they themselves do not admit to. Nor can it be simply the case that a function is ensured by an increase in the attention directed upon it and endangered if that attention is reduced. There are a large number of procedures that one carries out purely automatically, with very little attention, but nevertheless performs with complete security. A walker, who scarcely knows where he is going, keeps to the right path for all that, and stops at his destination without having *gone astray* [*vergangen*]. Or at all events this is so as a rule. An expert pianist strikes the right keys without thinking. He may, of course, make an occasional mistake; but if automatic playing increased the danger of bungling, that danger would be at its greatest for a

virtuoso, whose playing, as a result of prolonged practice, has become *entirely* automatic. We know, on the contrary, that many procedures are carried out with quite particular certainty if they are not the object of a specially high degree of attention,[1] and that the mishap of a parapraxis is liable to occur precisely if special importance is attached to correct functioning and there has therefore certainly been no distraction of the necessary attention. It could be argued that this is the result of 'excitement', but it is difficult to see why the excitement should not on the contrary *increase* the attention directed to what is so earnestly intended. If by a slip of the tongue someone says the opposite of what he intends in an important speech or oral communication, it can scarcely be explained by the psycho-physiological or attention theory.

There are, moreover, a number of small subsidiary phenomena in the case of parapraxes, which we do not understand and on which the explanations so far given shed no light. For instance, if we have temporarily forgotten a name, we are annoyed about it, do all we can to remember it and cannot leave the business alone. Why in such cases do we so extremely seldom succeed in directing our attention, as we are after all anxious to do, to the word which (as we say) is 'on the tip of our tongue' and which we recognize at once when we are told it? Or again: there are cases in which the parapraxes multiply, form chains, and replace one another. On a first occasion one has missed an appointment. On the next occasion, when one has firmly decided not to forget *this* time, it turns out that one has made a note of the wrong hour. Or one tries to arrive at a forgotten word by roundabout ways and thereupon a second name escapes one which might have helped one to find the first. If one searches for this second name, a third disappears, and so on. As is well known, the same thing can happen with misprints, which are to be regarded as the parapraxes of the compositor. An obstinate misprint of this kind, so it is said, once slipped into a social-democrat newspaper. Its report of some ceremonial included the words: 'Among those present was to be noticed His Highness the *Kornprinz*.' Next day an attempt was

[1] [Freud has often suggested elsewhere that functions may be performed more accurately in the absence of conscious attention. See *P.E.L.*, 132.]

made at a correction. The paper apologized and said: 'We should of course have said "the *Knorprinz*".' [1] People speak in such cases of a 'demon of misprints' or a 'type-setting fiend'—terms which at least go beyond any psycho-physiological theory of misprints.[2]

Perhaps you are familiar, too, with the fact that it is possible to *provoke* slips of the tongue, to produce them, as it were, by suggestion. An anecdote illustrates this. A stage neophyte had been cast for the important part in [Schiller's] *Die Jungfrau von Orleans* of the messenger who announces to the King that 'der Connétable schickt sein Schwert zuruck [the Constable sends back his sword]'. A leading actor amused himself during the rehearsal by repeatedly inducing the nervous young man to say, instead of the words of the text: 'der Komfortabel schickt sein Pferd zuruck [the cab-driver sends back his horse].' [3] He achieved his aim: the wretched beginner actually made his début at the performance with the corrupt version, in spite of having been warned against it, or perhaps *because* he had been warned.

No light is thrown on these small features of parapraxes by the theory of withdrawal of attention. The theory need not on that account be wrong, however; it may merely lack something, some addition, before it is entirely satisfying. But some of the parapraxes, too, can themselves be looked at from another point of view.

Let us take *slips of the tongue* as the most suitable sort of parapraxis for our purpose—though we might equally well have chosen slips of the pen or misreading.[4] We must bear in mind

[1] [What was intended was the '*Kronprinz* (Crown Prince)'. '*Korn*' means 'corn' and '*Knorr*' 'protuberance'.]

[2] [Cf. *P.E.L.*, 130–1.]

[3] [There seems to be some confusion here. Actually (in Act I, Scene 2 of the play) it is the King himself who announces the Constable's defection.]

[4] [It is most unfortunate from the point of view of the translator that Freud chose slips of the tongue as his most frequent examples of parapraxes in all three of these lectures, since they are from their very nature peculiarly resistant to translation. We have, however, followed our invariable practice in the *Standard Edition* and kept Freud's instances, with footnote and square bracket explanations, rather than replace them by extraneous English ones. Plenty of the latter will be found elsewhere, especially in papers by A. A. Brill (1912) and Ernest Jones (1911).]

that so far we have only asked when –under what conditions— people make slips of the tongue, and it is only to that question that we have had an answer. But we might direct our interest elsewhere and enquire why it is that the slip occurred in this particular way and no other; and we might take into account what it is that emerges in the slip itself. You will observe that, so long as this question is unanswered and no light thrown on the product of the slip, the phenomenon remains a chance event from the psychological point of view, even though it may have been given a physiological explanation. If I make a slip of the tongue, I might obviously do so in an infinite number of ways, the right word might be replaced by any of a thousand others, it might be distorted in countless different directions. Is there something, then, that compels me in the particular case to make the slip in one special way, or does it remain a matter of chance, of arbitrary choice, and is the question perhaps one to which no sensible answer at all can be given?

Two writers, Meringer and Mayer (a philologist and a psychiatrist), in fact made an attempt in 1895 to attack the problem of parapraxes from this angle. They collected examples and began by treating them in a purely descriptive way. This, of course, provides no explanation as yet, though it might pave the way to one. They distinguish the various kinds of distortions imposed by the slip on the intended speech as 'transpositions', 'pre-sonances [anticipations]', 'post-sonances [perseverations]', 'fusions (contaminations)' and 'replacements (substitutions)'. I will give you some examples of these main groups proposed by the authors. An instance of transposition would be to say '*the Milo of Venus*' instead of 'the Venus of Milo' – a transposition of the order of the words; an instance of a pre-sonance [anticipation] would be 'es war nur *auf der Schwer* . . . auf der Brust so schwer',[1] and a post-sonance [perseveration] would be exemplified by the well known toast that went wrong: 'Ich fordere Sie *auf*, *auf* das Wohl unseres Chefs *aufzustossen*' [instead of *anzustossen*].[2] These three forms of slip of the tongue are not

[1] [The phrase intended was: 'it lay on my breast so heavily.' The meaningless '*Schwer*' was a distortion of '*Brust*' (breast) owing to an anticipation of the '*schw*' of '*schwer* (heavy)'. This and the preceding example are also in *P.E.L.*, 53–4.]

[2] ['I call on you to *hiccough to*' (instead of 'drink to'), 'the health of

exactly common. You will come on much more numerous examples in which the slip results from contraction or fusion. Thus, for instance, a gentleman addressed a lady in the street in the following words: 'If you will permit me, madam, I should like to *beglei-digen* you.' The composite word,[1] in addition to the '*begleiten* [to accompany]', evidently has concealed in it '*beleidigen* [to insult]'. (Incidentally, the young man was not likely to have much success with the lady.) As an example of a substitution Meringer and Mayer give the case of someone saying, 'Ich gebe die Praparate in den *Brief*kasten' instead of '*Brüt*kasten'.[2]

The attempted explanation which these authors base on their collection of instances is quite peculiarly inadequate. They believe that the sounds and syllables of a word have a particular 'valency' and that the innervation of an element of high valency may have a disturbing influence on one that is less valent. Here they are clearly basing themselves on the far from common cases of pre-sonance and post-sonance, these preferences of some sounds over others (if they in fact exist) can have no bearing at all on other effects of slips of the tongue. After all, the commonest slips of the tongue are when, instead of saying one word, we say another very much like it; and this similarity is for many people a sufficient explanation of such slips. For instance, a Professor declared in his inaugural lecture, 'I am not '*geneigt* [inclined]' (instead of '*geeignet* [qualified]') to appreciate the services of my highly esteemed predecessor.' Or another Professor remarked: 'In the case of the female genitals, in spite of many *Versuchungen* [temptations]—I beg your pardon, *Versuche* [experiments]. . . .'[3]

The most usual, and at the same time the most striking kind of slips of the tongue, however, are those in which one says the precise opposite of what one intended to say. Here, of course, we are very remote from relations between sounds and the effects of similarity; and instead we can appeal to the fact that

our Chief.' This, too, occurs in *P E L*, 54, where, however, the translation is slightly different.]

[1] [A meaningless one.]

[2] ['I put the preparation into the letter-box' instead of 'incubator', literally, 'hatching-box'. These last two examples occur in *P E L*, 68 and 54.]

[3] [*P.E.L.*, 69 and 78–9.]

contraries have a strong conceptual kinship with each other and stand in a particularly close psychological association with each other.[1] There are historical examples of such occurrences. A President of the Lower House of our Parliament once opened the sitting with the words: 'Gentlemen, I take notice that a full quorum of members is present and herewith declare the sitting *closed*.' [2]

Any other familiar association can act in the same insidious fashion as a contrary one, and can emerge in quite unsuitable circumstances. Thus, on the occasion of a celebration in honour of the marriage of a child of Hermann von Helmholtz to a child of Werner von Siemens, the well-known inventor and industrialist, it is said that the duty of proposing the young couple's health fell to the famous physiologist Du Bois-Reymond. No doubt he made a brilliant speech, but he ended with the words: 'So, long life to the new firm of Siemens and Halske!' That was, of course, the name of the *old* firm. The juxtaposition of the two names must have been as familiar to a Berliner as Fortnum and Mason would be to a Londoner.[3]

We must therefore include among the causes of parapraxes not only relations between sounds and verbal similarity, but the influence of word-associations as well. But that is not all. In a number of cases it seems impossible to explain a slip of the tongue unless we take into account something that had been said, or even merely thought, in an earlier sentence. Once again, then, we have here a case of perseveration, like those insisted upon by Meringer, but of more distant origin. -I must confess that I feel on the whole as though after all this we were further than ever from understanding slips of the tongue.

Nevertheless I hope I am not mistaken in saying that during this last enquiry we have all of us formed a fresh impression of

[1] [Cf. below, p. 178 ff.]

[2] [*P E L.*, 59. The example was also used by Freud in one of his very last writings, the unfinished 'Some Elementary Lessons in Psycho-Analysis' (1940*b* [1938]).]

[3] [In the original 'as Redel and Beutel would be to a Viennese'. This last was a well-known outfitter's shop in Vienna. Siemens and Halske were, of course, the great electrical engineers.]

these instances of slips of the tongue, and that it may be worth while to consider that impression further. We examined the conditions under which in general slips of the tongue occur, and afterwards the influences which determine the kind of distortion which the slip produces. But we have so far paid no attention whatever to the *product* of the slip considered by itself, without reference to its origin. If we decide to do so, we are bound in the end to find the courage to say that in a few examples what results from the slip of the tongue has a sense of its own. What do we mean by 'has a sense'? That the product of the slip of the tongue may perhaps itself have a right to be regarded as a completely valid psychical act, pursuing an aim of its own, as a statement with a content and significance. So far we have always spoken of 'parapraxes [faulty acts]', but it seems now as though sometimes the faulty act was itself quite a *normal* act, which merely took the place of the other act which was the one expected or intended.

The fact of the parapraxis having a sense of its own seems in certain cases evident and unmistakable. When the President of the Lower House with his first words *closed* the sitting instead of opening it, we feel inclined, in view of our knowledge of the circumstances in which the slip of the tongue occurred, to recognize that the parapraxis had a sense. The President expected nothing good of the sitting and would have been glad if he could have brought it to an immediate end. We have no difficulty in pointing to the sense of this slip of the tongue, or, in other words, in interpreting it. Or, let us suppose that one lady says to another in tones of apparent admiration: 'That smart new hat. I suppose you *aufgepatzt* [a non-existent word instead of *aufgeputzt* trimmed] it yourself?' Then no amount of scientific propriety will succeed in preventing our seeing behind this slip of the tongue the words: 'This hat is a *Patzerei* [botched-up affair].' Or, once more, we are told that a lady who was well-known for her energy remarked on one occasion: 'My husband asked his doctor what diet he ought to follow; but the doctor told him he had no need to diet, he could eat and drink what I want.' Here again the slip of the tongue has an unmistakable other side to it: it was giving expression to a consistently planned programme.[1]

[1] [These two last examples appear in *P E L.*, 87 and 70.]

If it turned out, Ladies and Gentlemen, that not only *a few* instances of slips of the tongue and of parapraxes in general have a sense, but a considerable number of them, the *sense* of parapraxes, of which we have so far heard nothing, would inevitably become their most interesting feature and would push every other consideration into the background. We should then be able to leave all physiological or psycho-physiological factors on one side and devote ourselves to purely psychological investigations into the sense – that is, the meaning or purpose – of parapraxes. We shall therefore make it our business to test this expectation on a considerable number of observations.

But before carrying out this intention I should like to invite you to follow me along another track. It has repeatedly happened that a creative writer has made use of a slip of the tongue or some other parapraxis as an instrument for producing an imaginative effect. This fact alone must prove to us that he regards the parapraxis – the slip of the tongue, for instance – as having a sense, since he has produced it deliberately. For what has happened is not that the author has made an accidental slip of the pen and has then allowed it to be used by one of his characters as a slip of the tongue; he intends to bring something to our notice by means of the slip of the tongue and we can enquire what that something is – whether perhaps he wants to suggest that the character in question is absent-minded and fatigued or is going to have an attack of migraine. If the author uses the slip as though it had a sense, we have no wish, of course, to exaggerate the importance of this. After all, a slip might in fact be without a sense, a chance psychical event, or it might have a sense in only quite rare cases, but the author would still retain his right to intellectualize it by *furnishing* it with a sense so as to employ it for his own purposes. Nor would it be surprising if we had more to learn about slips of the tongue from creative writers than from philologists and psychiatrists.

An example of this kind is to be found in [Schiller's] *Wallenstein* (*Piccolomini*, Act I, Scene 5). In the preceding scene Max Piccolomini has ardently espoused the Duke's [Wallenstein's] cause, and has been passionately describing the blessings of peace, of which he has become aware in the course of a journey while escorting Wallenstein's daughter to the camp. As he

leaves the stage, his father [Octavio] and Questenberg, the emissary from the Court, are plunged in consternation. Scene 5 continues:

QUESTENBERG Alas, alas! and stands it so?
What, friend! and do we let him go away
In this delusion – let him go away?
Not call him back immediately, not open
His eyes upon the spot?
OCTAVIO (*recovering himself out of a deep study*) He now has open'd mine,
And I see more than pleases me.
QUEST. What is it?
OCT. Curse on this journey!
QUEST. But why so? What is it?
OCT. Come, come along friend! I must follow up
The ominous track immediately. Mine eyes
Are open'd now, and I must use them. Come!
(*Draws Q. on with him.*)
QUEST. What now? *Where* go you then?
OCT. To her . . .
QUEST. To—
OCT. (*correcting himself*) To the Duke. Come let us go.
[Coleridge's translation.]

Octavio had meant to say 'to him', to the Duke. But he makes a slip of the tongue, and, by saying 'to her' he betrays to *us* at least that he has clearly recognized the influence that has made the young warrior into an enthusiast for peace.[1]

A still more impressive example has been discovered by Otto Rank [1910*a*] in Shakespeare. It is from *The Merchant of Venice*, in the famous scene in which the fortunate lover chooses between the three caskets, and perhaps I cannot do better than read you Rank's short account of it:

'A slip of the tongue occurs in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* (Act III, Scene 2), which is from the dramatic point of view extremely subtly motivated and which is put to brilliant technical use. Like the slip in *Wallenstein* to which Freud has drawn attention, it shows that dramatists have a clear understanding of the mechanism and meaning of this kind of parapraxis and assume that the same is true of their audience. Portia, who by her father's will has been bound to the choice of a husband by lot, has so far escaped all her unwelcome suitors by a fortunate chance. Having at last found in Bassanio

[1] [This example and the following one also occur in *P E L.*, 96–8.]

the suitor who is to her liking, she has cause to fear that he too will choose the wrong casket. She would very much like to tell him that even so he could rest assured of her love; but she is prevented by her vow. In this internal conflict the poet makes her say to the suitor she favours:

> I pray you tarry; pause a day or two
> Before you hazard: for, in choosing wrong,
> I lose your company, therefore forbear a while:
> There's something tells me (*but it is not love*
> I would not lose you . . .
> . . . I could teach you
> How to choose right, but then I am forsworn;
> So will I never be; so may you miss me;
> But if you do you'll make me wish a sin,
> That I have been forsworn. Beshrew your eyes,
> They have o'erlooked me, and divided me,
> *One half of me is yours, the other half yours,*
> *Mine own, I would say*, but if mine, then yours,
> And so all yours.

The thing of which she wanted to give him only a very subtle hint, because she should have concealed it from him altogether, namely, that even before he made his choice she was *wholly* his and loved him—it is precisely this that the poet, with a wonderful psychological sensitivity, causes to break through openly in her slip of the tongue; and by this artistic device he succeeds in relieving both the lover's unbearable uncertainty and the suspense of the sympathetic audience over the outcome of his choice.'

Observe, too, how skilfully Portia in the end reconciles the two statements contained in her slip of the tongue, how she solves the contradiction between them and yet finally shows that it was the slip that was in the right:

> 'But if mine, then yours,
> And so all yours.'

It has occasionally happened that a thinker whose field lies outside medicine has, by something he says, revealed the sense of a parapraxis and anticipated our efforts at explaining them. You all know of the witty satirist Lichtenberg (1742–99), of whom Goethe said: 'Where he makes a jest a problem lies concealed.' Sometimes the jest brings the *solution* of the problem to light as well. In Lichtenberg's *Witzige und Satirische Einfälle*

[Witty and Satirical Thoughts, 1853] we find this: 'He had read so much Homer that he always read "*Agamemnon*" instead of "*angenommen* [supposed]".' Here we have the whole theory of misreading.[1]

We must see next time whether we can go along with these writers in their view of parapraxes.

[1] [Lichtenberg was a favourite author of Freud's and many of his epigrams are discussed in *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious* (1905*c*). The Agamemnon remark is further considered below, p. 70. It is quoted in the book on jokes (*Standard Ed.*, 8, 93) as well as in *P.E.L.*, 112, where Goethe's comment also appears (*P.E.L.*, 218).]

LECTURE III

PARAPRAXES (*continued*)

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, We arrived last time at the idea of considering parapraxes not in relation to the intended function which they disturbed but on their own account; and we formed an impression that in particular cases they seemed to be betraying a sense of their own. We then reflected that if confirmation could be obtained on a wider scale that parapraxes have a sense, their sense would soon become more interesting than the investigation of the circumstances in which they come about.

Let us once more reach an agreement upon what is to be understood by the 'sense' of a psychical process. We mean nothing other by it than the intention it serves and its position in a psychical continuity. In most of our researches we can replace 'sense' by 'intention' or 'purpose'.[1] Was it, then, merely a deceptive illusion or a poetic exaltation of parapraxes when we thought we recognized an intention in them?

We will continue to take slips of the tongue as our examples. If we now look through a considerable number of observations of that kind, we shall find whole categories of cases in which the intention, the sense, of the slip is plainly visible. Above all there are those in which what was intended is replaced by its contrary. The President of the Lower House [p. 34] said in his opening speech: 'I declare the sitting closed.' That is quite unambiguous. The sense and intention of his slip was that he wanted to close the sitting. 'Er sagt es ja selbst'[2] we are tempted to quote we need only take him at his word. Do not interrupt

[1] [It has been thought best to translate the German word '*Tendenz*' by 'purpose' throughout these lectures. The meanings of the two words do not, however, coincide, and in a few passages some such rendering as 'trend' would be preferable. '*Tendenz*' is almost never equivalent to 'tendency', though the adjective '*tendenziös*' has become naturalized in the English form of 'tendentious', as applied, for instance, to a play 'with a purpose'.]

[2] ['He says so himself.' This is a line from the standard German translation of a phrase in *Figaro* which occurs repeatedly in the sextet in Act III.]

me at this point by objecting that that is impossible, that we know that he did not want to close the sitting but to open it, and that he himself, whom we have just recognized as the supreme court of appeal, could confirm the fact that he wanted to open it. You are forgetting that we have come to an agreement that we will begin by regarding parapraxes on their own account; their relation to the intention which they have disturbed is not to be discussed till later. Otherwise you will be guilty of a logical error by simply evading the problem that is under discussion by what is called in English 'begging the question'.

In other cases, where the slip does not express the precise contrary, an opposite sense can nevertheless be brought out by it. 'I am not *geneigt* [inclined] to appreciate the services of my predecessor' [p. 33]. *Geneigt* is not the contrary of *geeignet* [qualified], but it expresses openly something which contrasts sharply with the situation in which the speech was to be made.

In yet other cases the slip of the tongue merely adds a second sense to the one intended. The sentence then sounds like a contraction, abbreviation or condensation of several sentences. Thus, when the energetic lady said, 'He can eat and drink what I want' [p. 35], it was just as though she had said 'He can eat and drink what he wants; but what has *he* to do with wanting? *I* will want instead of him.' A slip of the tongue often gives the impression of being an abbreviation of this sort. For instance, a Professor of Anatomy at the end of a lecture on the nasal cavities asked whether his audience had understood what he said and, after general assent, went on: 'I can hardly believe that, since even in a city with millions of inhabitants, those who understand the nasal cavities can be counted *on one finger*. . . . I beg your pardon, on the fingers of one hand.' The abbreviated phrase has a sense too—namely, that there is only one person who understands them.[1]

In contrast to these groups of cases, in which the parapraxis itself brings its sense to light, there are others in which the parapraxis produces nothing that has any sense of its own, and which therefore sharply contradict our expectations. If someone twists a proper name about by a slip of the tongue or puts an abnormal series of sounds together, these very common events

[1] [Repeated from *P.E.L.*, 78.]

alone seem to give a negative reply to our question whether all parapraxes have some sort of sense. Closer examination of such instances, however, shows that these distortions are easily understood and that there is by no means so great a distinction between these more obscure cases and the earlier straightforward ones.

A man who was asked about the health of his horse replied: 'Well, it *draut* [a meaningless word] . . . it *dauert* [will last] another month perhaps.' When he was asked what he had really meant to say, he explained that he had thought it was a '*traurige* [sad]' story. The combination of '*dauert*' and '*traurig*' had produced '*draut*'.[1]

Another man, speaking of some occurrences he disapproved of, went on: 'But then facts came to *Vorschwein* [a non-existent word, instead of *Vorschein* (light)]. . . .' In reply to enquiries he confirmed the fact that he had thought these occurrences '*Schweinereien*' ['disgusting', literally 'piggish']. '*Vorschein*' and '*Schweinereien*' combined to produce the strange word '*Vorschwein*'.[2]

You will recall the case of the young man who asked the unknown lady if he might '*begleitdigen*' her [p. 33]. We ventured to divide up this verbal form into '*begleiten* [accompany]' and '*beleidigen* [insult]', and we felt certain enough of this interpretation not to need any confirmation of it. You will see from these examples that even these obscurer cases of slips of the tongue can be explained by a convergence, a mutual '*interference*', between two different intended speeches; the differences between these cases of slips arise merely from the fact that on some occasions one intention takes the place of the other completely (becomes a substitute for it), as in slips of the tongue that express the contrary, whereas on other occasions the one intention has to be satisfied with distorting or modifying the other, so that composite structures are produced, which make sense, to a greater or lesser degree, on their own account.

We seem now to have grasped the secret of a large number of slips of the tongue. If we bear this discovery in mind, we shall be able to understand other groups as well which have puzzled us hitherto. In cases of distortion of names, for instance, we

[1] Meringer and Mayer. [*P.E.L.*, 58.]
[2] Meringer and Mayer. [*P.E.L.*, 57.]

cannot suppose that it is always a matter of competition between two similar but different names. It is not difficult, however, to guess the second intention. The distortion of a name occurs often enough apart from slips of the tongue; it seeks to give the name an offensive sound or to make it sound like something inferior, and it is a familiar practice (or malpractice), designed as an insult, which civilized people soon learn to abandon, but which they are *reluctant* to abandon. It is still often permitted as a 'joke', though a pretty poor one. As a blatant and ugly example of this way of distorting names, I may mention that in these days [of the first World War] the name of the President of the French Republic, Poincaré, has been changed into '*Schweinskarre*'.[1] It is therefore plausible to suppose that the same insulting intention is present in these slips of the tongue and is trying to find expression in the distortion of a name. Similar explanations suggest themselves along the same lines for certain instances of slips of the tongue with comic or absurd results. 'I call on you to hiccough [*aufzu tossen*] to the health of our Chief [p. 32].' Here a ceremonial atmosphere is unexpectedly disturbed by the intrusion of a word which calls up an unsavoury idea, and, on the model of certain insulting and offensive phrases, we can scarcely avoid a suspicion that a purpose was trying to find expression which was in violent contradiction to the ostensibly respectful words. What the slip seems to have been saying was something like: 'Don't you believe it! I don't mean this seriously! I don't care a rap for the fellow!' Just the same thing applies to slips of the tongue which turn innocent words into indecent or obscene ones: thus, '*Apopos*' for '*a propos*' or '*Eischeiss weibchen*' for '*Eiweiss-scheibchen*'.[2]

Many people, as we know, derive some pleasure from a habit like this of deliberately distorting innocent words into obscene ones, such distortions are regarded as funny, and when we hear one we must in fact first enquire from the speaker whether he

[1] [The Viennese term for a pork chop.]

[2] Both from Meringer and Meyer [They are also in *P E L.*, 82 In the first of these untranslatable examples '*Apopos*' is a non-existent word, but '*Popo*' is a nursery word for 'bottom'. In the second example the nonsense word means literally 'egg-shit female', while the intended word means 'small slices of white of egg.']

uttered it intentionally as a joke or whether it happened as a slip of the tongue.

Well, it looks now as though we have solved the problem of parapraxes, and with very little trouble! They are not chance events but serious mental acts; they have a sense; they arise from the concurrent action —or perhaps rather, the mutually opposing action —of two different intentions. But now I see too that you are preparing to overwhelm me with a mass of questions and doubts which will have to be answered and dealt with before we can enjoy this first outcome of our work. I certainly have no desire to force hasty decisions upon you. Let us take them all in due order, one after the other, and give them cool consideration.

What is it you want to ask me? Do I think that this explanation applies to *all* parapraxes or only to a certain number? Can this same point of view be extended to the many other kinds of parapraxis, to misreading, slips of the pen, forgetting, bungled actions, mislaying, and so on? In view of the psychical nature of parapraxes, what significance remains for the factors of fatigue, excitement, absent-mindedness and interference with the attention? Further, it is clear that of the two competing purposes in a parapraxis one is always manifest, but the other not always. What do we do, then, in order to discover the latter? And, if we think we have discovered it, how do we prove that it is not merely a probable one but the only correct one? Is there anything else you want to ask? If not, I will go on myself. You will recall that we do not set much store by parapraxes themselves, and that all we want is to learn from studying them something that may be turned to account for psycho-analysis. I therefore put this question to you. What are these intentions or purposes which are able to disturb others in this way? And what are the relations between the disturbing purposes and the disturbed ones? Thus, no sooner is the problem solved than our work begins afresh.

First, then, is this the explanation of *all* cases of slips of the tongue? I am very much inclined to think so, and my reason is that every time one investigates an instance of a slip of the tongue an explanation of this kind is forthcoming. But it is also true that there is no way of proving that a slip of the tongue

cannot occur without this mechanism. It may be so; but theoretically it is a matter of indifference to us, since the conclusions we want to draw for our introduction to psychoanalysis remain, even though—which is certainly not the case—our view holds good of only a minority of cases of slips of the tongue. The next question—whether we may extend our view to other sorts of parapraxis—I will answer in advance with a 'yes'. You will be able to convince yourselves of this when we come to examining instances of slips of the pen, bungled actions, and so on. But for technical reasons I suggest that we should postpone this task till we have treated slips of the tongue themselves still more thoroughly.

A more detailed reply is called for by the question of what significance remains for the factors put forward by the authorities—disturbances of the circulation, fatigue, excitement, absentmindedness and the theory of disturbed attention—if we accept the psychical mechanism of slips of the tongue which we have described. Observe that we are not denying these factors. It is in general not such a common thing for psycho-analysis to *deny* something asserted by other people; as a rule it merely adds something new—though no doubt it occasionally happens that this thing that has hitherto been overlooked and is now brought up as a fresh addition is in fact the essence of the matter. The influence on the production of slips of the tongue by physiological dispositions brought about by slight illness, disturbances of the circulation or states of exhaustion, must be recognized at once; daily and personal experience will convince you of it. But how little they explain! Above all, they are not necessary preconditions of parapraxes. Slips of the tongue are just as possible in perfect health and in a normal state. These somatic factors only serve therefore, to facilitate and favour the peculiar mental mechanism of slips of the tongue. I once used an analogy to describe this relation,[1] and I will repeat it here since I can think of none better to take its place. Suppose that one dark night I went to a lonely spot and was there attacked by a rough who took away my watch and purse. Since I did not see the robber's face clearly, I laid my complaint at the nearest police station with the words. 'Loneliness and darkness have just robbed me of my valuables.' The police officer might then say to me: 'In

[1] [*P.E.L.*, 21.]

what you say you seem to be unjustifiably adopting an extreme mechanistic view. It would be better to represent the facts in this way: "Under the shield of darkness and favoured by loneliness, an unknown thief robbed you of your valuables." In your case the essential task seems to me to be that we should find the thief. Perhaps we shall then be able to recover the booty.'

Such psycho-physiological factors as excitement, absent-mindedness and disturbances of attention will clearly help us very little towards an explanation. They are only empty phrases, screens behind which we must not let ourselves be prevented from having a look. The question is rather what it is that has been brought about here by the excitement, the particular distracting of attention. And again, we must recognize the importance of the influence of sounds, the similarity of words and the familiar associations aroused by words. These facilitate slips of the tongue by pointing to the paths they can take. But if I have a path open to me, does that fact automatically decide that I shall take it? I need a motive in addition before I resolve in favour of it and furthermore a force to propel me along the path. So these relations of sounds and words are also, like the somatic dispositions, only things that *favour* slips of the tongue and cannot provide the true explanation of them. Only consider: in an immense majority of cases my speech is not disturbed by the circumstance that the words I am using recall others with a similar sound, that they are intimately linked with their contraries or that familiar associations branch off from them. Perhaps we might still find a way out by following the philosopher Wundt, when he says that slips of the tongue arise if, as a result of physical exhaustion, the inclination to associate gains the upper hand over what the speaker otherwise intends to say. That would be most convincing if it were not contradicted by experience, which shows that in one set of cases the *somatic* factors favouring slips of the tongue are absent and in another set of cases the *associative* factors favouring them are equally absent.

I am particularly interested, however, in your next question: how does one discover the two mutually interfering purposes? You do not realize, probably, what a momentous question this is. One of the two, the purpose that is disturbed, is of course

unmistakable: the person who makes the slip of the tongue knows it and admits to it. It is only the other, the disturbing purpose, that can give rise to doubt and hesitation. Now, we have already seen, and no doubt you have not forgotten, that in a number of cases this other purpose is equally evident. It is indicated by the *outcome* of the slip, if only we have the courage to grant that outcome a validity of its own. Take the President of the Lower House, whose slip of the tongue said the contrary of what he intended. It is clear that he wanted to open the sitting, but it is equally clear that he also wanted to close its That is so obvious that it leaves us nothing to interpret. But in the other cases, in which the disturbing purpose only *distorts* the original one without itself achieving complete expression, how do we arrive at the disturbing purpose from the distortion?

In a first group of cases this is done quite simply and securely - in the same way, in fact, as with the *disturbed* purpose. We get the speaker to give us the information directly. After his slip of the tongue he at once produces the wording which he originally intended: 'It *draut* . . . no, it *dauert* [will last] another month perhaps.' [p. 42]. Well, in just the same way we get him to tell us the *disturbing* purpose. 'Why', we ask him, 'did you say "*draut*"?' He replies, 'I wanted to say "It's a *traurige* [sad] story".' Similarly, in the other case, where the slip of the tongue was '*Vorschuein*' [p. 42], the speaker confirms the fact that he had wanted at first to say 'It's a *Schweinerei* [disgusting]', but had controlled himself and gone off into another remark. Here then the distorting purpose is as securely established as the distorted one. My choice of these examples has not been unintentional, for their origin and solution come neither from me nor from any of my followers. And yet in both these cases active measures of a kind were necessary in order to bring about the solution. The speaker had to be asked why he had made the slip and what he could say about it. Otherwise he might perhaps have passed over his slip without wanting to explain it. But when he was asked he gave the explanation with the first thing that occurred to him.[1] And now please observe that this small

[1] [The phrase 'thing that occurred to him' here stands for the German word '*Einfall*', for which there is no satisfactory English equivalent. The word appears constantly in the course of these lectures – two or three times in the present passage, repeatedly in Lecture VI, and at many

active step and its successful outcome are already a psycho-analysis and are a model for every psycho-analytic investigation which we shall embark upon later.

Am I too mistrustful, however, if I suspect that at the very moment at which psycho-analysis makes its appearance before you resistance to it simultaneously raises its head? Do you not feel inclined to object that the information given by the person of whom the question was asked—the person who made the slip of the tongue—is not completely conclusive? He was naturally anxious, you think, to fulfil the request to explain the slip, so he said the first thing that came into his head which seemed capable of providing such an explanation. But that is no proof that the slip did in fact take place in that way. It *may* have been so, but it may just as well have happened otherwise. And something else might have occurred to him which would have fitted in as well or perhaps even better.

It is strange how little respect you have at bottom for a psychical fact! Imagine that someone had undertaken the chemical analysis of a certain substance and had arrived at a particular weight for one component of it—so and so many milligrammes. Certain inferences could be drawn from this weight. Now do you suppose that it would ever occur to a chemist to criticize those inferences on the ground that the isolated substance might equally have had some other weight? Everyone will bow before the fact that this was the weight and

points elsewhere—so that some comment on it will be useful. It is customarily translated 'association'—an objectionable term, since it is ambiguous and question-begging. If a person is thinking of something and we say that he has an '*Einfall*' and that this implies is that something else has occurred to his mind. But if we say that he has an 'association', it seems to imply that the something else that has occurred to him is in some way connected with what he was thinking of before. Much of the discussion in these pages turns on whether the second thought is in fact connected or is necessarily connected with the original one—whether the '*Einfall*' is an 'association'. So that to translate '*Einfall*' by 'association' is bound to prejudge the issue. Nevertheless it is not always easy to avoid this, more especially as Freud himself sometimes uses the German '*Association*' as a synonym for '*Einfall*', especially in the term '*freie Association*', which must inevitably be translated 'free association'. Every endeavour will be made in the present discussion to avoid ambiguity, even at the cost of some unwieldy phraseology. Later on, the need to avoid the word 'association' will become less pressing.]

none other and will confidently draw his further inferences from it. But when you are faced with the psychical fact that a particular thing occurred to the mind of the person questioned, you will not allow the fact's validity: something else might have occurred to him! You nourish the illusion of there being such a thing as psychical freedom, and you will not give it up. I am sorry to say I disagree with you categorically over this.

You will break off at that, but only to take up your resistance again at another point. You proceed: 'It is the special technique of psycho-analysis, as we understand, to get people under analysis themselves to produce the solution of their problems. [Cf p. 101 below.] Now let us take another example the one in which a speaker proposing the toast of honour on a ceremonial occasion called on his audience to hiccough [*aufzustossen*] to the health of the Chief [p. 32]. You say [p. 43] that the disturbing intention in this case was an insulting one: that was what was opposing the speaker's expression of respect. But this is pure interpretation on your part, based upon observations apart from the slip of the tongue. If in this instance you were to question the person responsible for the slip, he would not confirm your idea that he intended an insult, on the contrary, he would energetically repudiate it. Why, in view of this clear denial, do you not abandon your unprovable interpretation?'

Yes. You have lighted on a powerful argument this time. I can imagine the unknown proposer of the toast. He is probably a subordinate to the Chief of the Department who is being honoured perhaps he himself is already an Assistant Lecturer, a young man with excellent prospects in life. I try to force him to admit that he may nevertheless have had a feeling that there was something in him opposing his toast in honour of the Chief. But this lands me in a nice mess. He gets impatient and suddenly breaks out: 'Just you stop trying to cross-question me or I shall turn nasty. You're going to ruin my whole career with your suspicions. I simply said "*auf tossen* [hiccough to]" instead of "*anstossen* [drink to]" because I'd said "*auf*" twice before in the same sentence. That's what Meringer calls a perseveration and there's nothing more to be interpreted about it. D'you understand? *Basta*" H'm! That was a surprising reaction, a truly energetic denial. I see there's nothing more to be done with

the young man. But I also reflect that he shows a strong personal interest in insisting on his parapraxis not having a sense. You may also feel that there was something wrong in his being quite so rude about a purely theoretical enquiry. But, you will think, when all is said and done he must know what he wanted to say and what he didn't.

But must he? Perhaps that may still be the question.

Now, however, you think you have me at your mercy. 'So that's your technique', I hear you say. 'When a person who has made a slip of the tongue says something about it that suits you, you pronounce him to be the final decisive authority on the subject. "He says so himself! [p. 40]". But when what he says doesn't suit your book, then all at once you say he's of no importance – there's no need to believe him.'[1]

That is quite true. But I can put a similar case to you in which the same monstrous event occurs. When someone charged with an offence confesses his deed to the judge, the judge believes his confession; but if he denies it, the judge does not believe him. If it were otherwise, there would be no administration of justice, and in spite of occasional errors we must allow that the system works.

'Are you a judge, then? And is a person who has made a slip of the tongue brought up before you on a charge? So making a slip of the tongue is an offence, is it?'[2]

Perhaps we need not reject the comparison. But I would ask you to observe what profound differences of opinion we have reached after a little investigation of what seemed such innocent problems concerning the parapraxes – differences which at the moment we see no possible way of smoothing over. I propose a provisional compromise on the basis of the analogy with the judge and the defendant. I suggest that you shall grant me that there can be no doubt of a parapraxis having a sense if the subject himself admits it. *I* will admit in return that we cannot arrive at a direct proof of the suspected sense if the subject refuses us information, and equally, of course, if he is not at hand to give us the information. Then, as in the case of the

[1] [A long discussion of this difficulty will be found in one of Freud's last papers, on 'Constructions in Analysis' (1937*d*).]

[2] [The German words are on the same pattern: '*Versprechen*' and '*Vergehen*'.]

administration of justice, we are obliged to turn to circumstantial evidence, which may make a decision more probable in some instances and less so in others. In the law courts it may be necessary for practical purposes to find a defendant guilty on circumstantial evidence. We are under no such necessity; but neither are we obliged to disregard the circumstantial evidence. It would be a mistake to suppose that a science consists entirely of strictly proved theses, and it would be unjust to require this. Only a disposition with a passion for authority will raise such a demand, someone with a craving to replace his religious catechism by another, though it is a scientific one. Science has only a few apodeictic propositions in its catechism: the rest are assertions promoted by it to some particular degree of probability. It is actually a sign of a scientific mode of thought to find satisfaction in these approximations to certainty and to be able to pursue constructive work further in spite of the absence of final confirmation.

But if the subject does not himself give us the explanation of the sense of a parapraxis, where are we to find the starting-points for our interpretation — the circumstantial evidence? In various directions. In the first place from analogies with phenomena apart from parapraxes, when, for instance, we assert that distorting a name when it occurs as a slip of the tongue has the same insulting sense as a deliberate twisting of a name. Further, from the psychical situation in which the parapraxis occurs, the character of the person who makes the parapraxis, and the impressions which he has received before the parapraxis and to which the parapraxis is perhaps a reaction. What happens as a rule is that the interpretation is carried out according to general principles: to begin with there is only a suspicion, a suggestion for an interpretation, and we then find a confirmation by examining the psychical situation. Sometimes we have to wait for subsequent events as well — which have, as it were, announced themselves by the parapraxis — before our suspicion is confirmed.

I cannot easily give you illustrations of this if I limit myself to the field of slips of the tongue, though even there some good instances are to be found. The young man who wanted to '*begleitdigen*' a lady [p. 33] was certainly a timid character. The lady whose husband could eat and drink what *she* wanted

[p. 35] is known to me as one of those energetic women who wear the breeches in their home. Or let us take the following example: At the General Meeting of the 'Concordia'[1] a young member made a speech of violent opposition, in the course of which he addressed the committee as '*Vorschussmitglieder* [lending members]', a word which seems to be made up of '*Vorstand* [directors]' and '*Ausschuss* [committee]'. We shall suspect that some disturbing purpose was at work in him, acting against his violent opposition, based on something connected with a loan. And in fact we learnt from our informant that the speaker was constantly in financial difficulties and just at that time had applied for a loan. The disturbing intention could therefore be replaced by the thought: 'Moderate your opposition; these are the same people who will have to sanction your loan.'

But I can give you a large selection of circumstantial evidence of this kind if I pass over to the wide field of the other parapraxes.

If anyone forgets a proper name which is familiar to him normally or if, in spite of all his efforts, he finds it difficult to keep it in mind, it is plausible to suppose that he has something against the person who bears the name so that he prefers not to think of him. Consider, for instance, what we learn in the following cases about the psychical situation in which the parapraxis occurred.

'A Herr Y. fell in love with a lady, but he met with no success, and shortly afterwards she married a Herr X. Thereafter, Herr Y., in spite of having known Herr X for a long time and even having business dealings with him, forgot his name over and over again, so that several times he had to enquire what it was from other people when he wanted to correspond with Herr X.' Herr Y. evidently wanted to know nothing of his more fortunate rival: 'never thought of shall he be.'[2]

Or: A lady enquired from her doctor for news of a common acquaintance, but called her by her maiden name. She had

[1] [The Society of Journalists in Vienna. This anecdote will be found in *P.E.L.*, 80, it was originally supplied by Max Graf.]

[2] From Jung [1907, 52. This appears in *P.E.L.*, 250. The quotation at the end, 'Nicht gelacht soll seiner werden', forms the first line and a repeated refrain in a poem of Heine's from the *Nachlese*, 'Aus der Matratzengruft', No. IV.]

forgotten her friend's married name. She admitted afterwards that she had been very unhappy about the marriage and disliked her friend's husband.[1]

We shall have a good deal to say about forgetting names in other connections [p. 74 f. below]; for the moment we are principally interested in the psychical situation in which the forgetting occurs.

The forgetting of intentions can in general be traced to an opposing current of thought, which is unwilling to carry out the intention. But this view is not only held by us psycho-analysts; it is the general opinion, accepted by everyone in their daily lives and only denied when it comes to theory. A patron who gives his *protege* the excuse of having forgotten his request fails to justify himself. The *protege* immediately thinks: 'It means nothing to him; it's true he promised, but he doesn't really want to do it.'[2] For that reason forgetting is banned in certain circumstances of ordinary life; the distinction between the popular and the psycho-analytic view of these parapraxes seems to have disappeared. Imagine the lady of the house receiving her guest with the words: 'What? have you come to-day? I'd quite forgotten I invited you for to-day.' Or imagine a young man confessing to his *fiancee* that he had forgotten to keep their last *rendez-vous*. He will certainly not confess it; he will prefer to invent on the spur of the moment the most improbable obstacles which prevented his appearing at the time and afterwards made it impossible for him to let her know. We all know too that in military affairs the excuse of having forgotten something is of no help and is no protection against punishment, and we must all feel that that is justified. Here all at once everyone is united in thinking that a particular parapraxis has a sense and in knowing what that sense is. Why are they not consistent enough to extend this knowledge to the other parapraxes and to admit them fully? There is of course an answer to this question too.

Since laymen have so little doubt about the sense of this forgetting of intentions, you will be the less surprised to find writers employing this sort of parapraxis in the same sense. Any of you who have seen or read Bernard Shaw's *Caesar and*

[1] From Brill [1912, 191; also *P.E.L.*, 224].

[2] [This situation is considered further below, p. 72 f.]

Cleopatra will remember that in the last scene Caesar, as he is leaving Egypt, is haunted by the idea that there is something else he had intended to do but has forgotten. In the end it turns out what this was: he had forgotten to say good-bye to Cleopatra. The dramatist is seeking by this little contrivance to ascribe to the great Caesar a superiority which he did not in fact possess and which he never desired. For historical sources will tell you that Caesar made Cleopatra follow him to Rome, that she was living there with her little Caesarion when Caesar was murdered, and that she thereupon fled from the city.[1]

Cases of forgetting an intention are in general so clear that they are not of much use for our purpose of obtaining circumstantial evidence of the sense of a parapraxis from the psychical situation. Let us therefore turn to a particularly ambiguous and obscure kind of parapraxis—to losing and mislaying. You will no doubt find it incredible that we ourselves can play an intentional part in what is so often the painful accident of losing something. But there are plenty of observations like the following one. A young man lost a pencil of his of which he had been very fond. The day before, he had received a letter from his brother-in-law which ended with these words: 'I have neither the inclination nor the time at present to encourage you in your frivolity and laziness.' The pencil had actually been given to him by this brother-in-law. Without this coincidence we could not, of course, have asserted that a part was played in the loss by an intention to get rid of the thing.[2] Similar cases are very common. We lose an object if we have quarrelled with the person who gave it to us and do not want to be reminded of him, or if we no longer like the object itself and want to have an excuse for getting another and better one instead. The same intention directed against an object can also play a part, of course, in cases of dropping, breaking or destroying things. Can we regard it as a matter of chance when a schoolchild immediately before his birthday loses, ruins or smashes some of his personal belongings, such as his satchel or his watch?

Nor will anyone who has sufficiently often experienced the torment of not being able to find something that he himself has

[1] [This quotation from Shaw appears also in *P.E.L.*, 154*n*.]

[2] From Dattner. [*P.E.L.*, 207.]

put away feel inclined to believe that there is a purpose in mislaying things. Yet instances are far from rare in which the circumstances attendant on the mislaying point to an intention to get rid of the object temporarily or permanently.

Here is the best example, perhaps, of such an occasion. A youngish man told me the following story: 'Some years ago there were misunderstandings between me and my wife. I found her too cold, and although I willingly recognized her excellent qualities we lived together without any tender feelings. One day, returning from a walk, she gave me a book which she had bought because she thought it would interest me. I thanked her for this mark of "attention", promised to read the book and put it on one side. After that I could never find it again. Months passed by, in which I occasionally remembered the lost book and made vain attempts to find it. About six months later my dear mother, who was not living with us, fell ill. My wife left home to nurse her mother-in-law. The patient's condition became serious and gave my wife an opportunity of showing the best side of herself. One evening I returned home full of enthusiasm and gratitude for what my wife had accomplished. I walked up to my desk, and without any definite intention but with a kind of somnambulistic certainty opened one of the drawers. On the very top I found the long-lost book I had mislaid.'[1] With the extinction of the motive the mislaying of the object ceased as well.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I could multiply this collection of examples indefinitely; but I will not do so here. You will in any case find a profusion of case material for the study of parapraxes in my *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (first published in 1901).[2] All these examples lead to the same result: they make it probable that parapraxes have a sense, and they show you how that sense is discovered or confirmed by the attendant circumstances. I will be briefer to-day, because we have adopted the limited aim of using the study of these phenomena as a help towards a preparation for psycho-analysis. There are only two

[1] [This appears in *P.E.L.*, 49.]

[2] See also similar collections by Maeder [1906-7] (in French), Brill [1912] (in English), Jones [1911] (in English) and J. Stärcke [1916] (in Dutch), etc.

groups of observations into which I need enter more fully here: accumulated and combined parapraxes and the confirmation of our interpretations by subsequent events.

Accumulated and combined parapraxes are without doubt the finest flower of their kind. If we had only been concerned to prove that parapraxes have a sense we should have confined ourselves to them from the first, for in their case the sense is unmistakable even to the dull-witted and forces itself on the most critical judgement. An accumulation of these phenomena betrays an obstinacy that is scarcely ever a characteristic of chance events but fits in well with something intentional. Finally, the mutual interchangeability between different species of parapraxes demonstrates what it is in parapraxes that is important and characteristic: not their form or the method which they employ but the purpose which they serve and which can be achieved in the most various ways. For this reason I will give you an instance of repeated forgetting. Ernest Jones [1911, 483] tells us that once, for reasons unknown to him, he left a letter lying on his desk for several days. At last he decided to send it off, but he had it returned to him by the Dead Letter Office[1] since he had forgotten to address it. After he had addressed it he took it to the post, but this time it had no stamp. And then at last he was obliged to admit his reluctance to sending the letter off at all.

In another case a bungled action is combined with an instance of mislaying. A lady travelled to Rome with her brother-in-law, who was a famous artist. The visitor was received with great honour by the German community in Rome, and among other presents he was given an antique gold medal. The lady was vexed that her brother-in-law did not appreciate the lovely object sufficiently. When she returned home (her place in Rome having been taken by her sister) she discovered while unpacking that she had brought the medal with her – how, she did not know. She at once sent a letter with the news to her brother-in-law, and announced that she would send the article she had walked off with back to Rome next day. But next day the medal had been so cleverly mislaid that it could not be found and sent off; and it was at this point, that the meaning

[1] [In English in the original. This example and the next two appear *P.E.L.*, 230–1.]

of her 'absent-mindedness' dawned on the lady: she wanted to keep the object for herself.[1]

I have already given you an example of a combination of a forgetting with an error, the case of someone forgetting an appointment and on a second occasion, having firmly decided not to forget the time, turning up at the wrong hour [p. 30]. An exactly similar case was reported to me from his own experience by a friend with literary as well as scientific interests. 'Some years ago', he told me, 'I allowed myself to be elected to the committee of a certain literary society, as I thought that the organization might one day be able to help me to have my play produced, and I took a regular part, though without being much interested, in the meetings which were held every Friday. Then, a few months ago, I was given the promise of a production at the theatre at F.; and since then I have regularly *forgotten* the meetings of the society. When I read your book on the subject I felt ashamed of my forgetfulness. I reproached myself with the thought that it was shabby behaviour on my part to stay away now that I no longer needed these people, and resolved on no account to forget the next Friday. I kept on reminding myself of this resolution until I carried it into effect and stood at the door of the room where the meetings were held. To my astonishment it was locked, the meeting was over. I had in fact made a mistake over the day, it was now Saturday!'

It would be agreeable to add further, similar examples. But I must proceed, and give you a glimpse of the cases in which our interpretation has to wait for the future for confirmation. The governing condition of these cases, it will be realized, is that the present psychical situation is unknown to us or inaccessible to our enquiries. Our interpretation is consequently no more than a suspicion to which we ourselves do not attach too much importance. Later, however, something happens which shows us how well-justified our interpretation had been. I was once the guest of a young married couple and heard the young woman laughingly describe her latest experience. The day after her return from the honeymoon she had called for her unmarried sister to go shopping with her as she used to do, while her husband went to his business. Suddenly she noticed

[1] Reported by R. Reitler.

a gentleman on the other side of the street, and nudging her sister had cried: 'Look, there goes Herr L.' She had forgotten that this gentleman had been her husband for some weeks. I shuddered as I heard the story, but I did not dare to draw the inference. The little incident only occurred to my mind some years later when the marriage had come to a most unhappy end.[1]

Maeder tells of a lady who, on the eve of her wedding had forgotten to try on her wedding-dress and, to her dressmaker's despair, only remembered it late in the evening He connects this forgetfulness with the fact that she was soon divorced from her husband. I know a lady now divorced from her husband, who in managing her money affairs frequently signed documents in her maiden name, many years before she in fact resumed it.—I know of other women who have lost their wedding-rings during the honeymoon, and I know too that the history of their marriages has given a sense to the accident. — And now here is one more glaring example, but with a happier ending. The story is told of a famous German chemist that his marriage did not take place, because he forgot the hour of his wedding and went to the laboratory instead of to the church. He was wise enough to be satisfied with a single attempt and died at a great age unmarried.

The idea may possibly have occurred to you that in these examples parapraxes have taken the place of the omens or auguries of the ancients. And indeed some omens were nothing else than parapraxes, as, for instance, when someone stumbled or fell down. Others of them, it is true, had the character of objective happenings and not of subjective acts. But you would hardly believe how difficult it sometimes is to decide whether a particular event belongs to the one group or to the other. An act so often understands how to disguise itself as a passive experience.

All those of us who can look back on a comparatively long experience of life will probably admit that we should have spared ourselves many disappointments and painful surprises if we had found the courage and determination to interpret small parapraxes experienced in our human contacts as auguries and to make use of them as indications of intentions that were still

[1] [This example and the two next will be found *P E L.*, 203-4.]

concealed. As a rule we dare not do so; it would make us feel as though, after a détour through science, we were becoming superstitious again. Nor do all auguries come true, and you will understand from our theories that they do not all need to come true.

LECTURE IV

PARAPRAXES (*concluded*)

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, We may take it as the outcome of our efforts so far and the basis of our further investigations that parapraxes have a sense. Let me insist once again that I am not asserting — and for our purposes there is no need to do so — that every single parapraxis that occurs has a sense, even though I regard that as probably the case. It is enough for us if we can point to such a sense relatively often in the different forms of parapraxis. Moreover, in this respect these different forms behave differently. Cases of slips of the tongue and of the pen, etc., may occur on a purely physiological basis. I cannot believe that this is so in the types depending on *forgetting* — forgetting names or intentions, mislaying, etc. . It is very probable that there are cases of *losing* which can be regarded as unintended. It is in general true that only a certain proportion of the *errors* that occur in ordinary life can be looked at from our point of view. You should bear these limitations in mind when henceforward we start from the assumption that parapraxes are psychical acts and arise from mutual interference between two intentions.

This is the first product of psycho-analysis. Psychology has hitherto known nothing of the occurrence of such mutual interferences or of the possibility that they might result in such phenomena. We have made a quite considerable extension to the world of psychical phenomena and have won for psychology phenomena which were not reckoned earlier as belonging to it.

Let us pause a moment longer over the assertion that parapraxes are 'psychical acts'. Does this imply more than what we have said already — that they have a sense? I think not. I think, rather, that the former assertion [that they are psychical acts] is more indefinite and more easily misunderstood. Anything that is observable in mental life may occasionally be described as a mental phenomenon. The question will then be whether the particular mental phenomenon has arisen immediately from

somatic, organic and material influences — in which case its investigation will not be part of psychology — or whether it is derived in the first instance from other mental processes, somewhere behind which the series of organic influences begins. It is this latter situation that we have in view when we describe a phenomenon as a mental process, and for that reason it is more expedient to clothe our assertion in the form: 'the phenomenon has a sense.' By 'sense' we understand 'meaning', 'intention,' 'purpose' and 'position in a continuous psychical context'. [Cf. p. 40.]

There are a number of other phenomena which are closely akin to parapraxes but to which that name is no longer appropriate. We call them chance and symptomatic actions. Like the others, they have the character of being without a motive, insignificant and unimportant, but they have in addition, more clearly, that of being unnecessary. They are distinguished from parapraxes by their lack of another intention with which they are in collision and which is disturbed by them. On the other hand, they merge insensibly into the gestures and movements which we regard as expressions of the emotions. These chance actions include all sorts of manipulations with our clothing, or parts of our body or objects within our reach, performed as though in play and apparently with no purpose, or, again, the omission of these manipulations; or, further, tunes that we hum to ourselves. I suggest that all these phenomena have a sense and can be interpreted in the same way as parapraxes, that they are small indications of more important mental processes and are fully valid psychical acts. But I do not propose to linger over this fresh extension of the field of mental phenomena; I shall return to the parapraxes, in connection with which problems important for psycho-analysis can be worked out with far greater clarity.[1]

The most interesting questions which we have raised about parapraxes and not yet answered are perhaps these. We have said that parapraxes are the product of mutual interference between two different intentions, of which one may be called the disturbed intention and the other the disturbing one. The

[1] [Symptomatic and chance actions form the subject of Chapter IX of *P.E.L.*]

disturbed intentions give no occasion for further questions, but concerning the latter we should like to know, first, what sort of intentions emerge as a disturbance to others, and secondly what is the relation of the disturbing intentions to the disturbed ones?

If you will allow me, I will once more take slips of the tongue as representatives of the whole class and I will reply to the second question before the first.

In a slip of the tongue the disturbing intention may be related in its content to the disturbed one, in which case it will contradict it or correct it or supplement it. Or—the more obscure and more interesting case—the content of the disturbing intention may have nothing to do with that of the disturbed one.

We shall have no difficulty in finding evidence of the former relation in instances we already know and in similar ones. In almost every case in which a slip of the tongue reverses the sense, the disturbing intention expresses the contrary to the disturbed one and the parapraxis represents a conflict between two incompatible inclinations. 'I declare the sitting opened, but I should prefer it to be already closed' is the sense of the President's slip of the tongue [p. 34]. A political periodical which had been accused of corruption defended itself in an article the climax of which should have been: 'Our readers will bear witness to the fact that we have always acted in the most *unself-seeking* manner for the good of the community.' But the editor entrusted with the preparation of the article wrote 'in the most *self-seeking* manner'. That is to say, he was thinking: 'This is what I am obliged to write; but I have different ideas.' A [German] member of parliament who was insisting that the truth should be told to the Emperor '*zu khaltlos* [unreservedly]' evidently heard an inner voice that was shocked at his boldness and, by a slip of the tongue, changed the word into '*zuckgratlos* [spinelessly]'.[1]

In the instances already familiar to you which give an impression of being contractions or abbreviations, what we have before us are corrections, additions or continuations, by means of which a second purpose makes itself felt alongside of the

[1] This was in the German Reichstag in November 1908. [A fuller account of this appears *P.E.L.*, 95–6. The preceding slip will be found *P.L.L.*, 120–1.]

first. 'Facts came to *Vorschein* [light]—better to say it straight out—they were *Scheinreten* [disgusting], well then, facts came to *Vorscheinen* [p. 42].' 'Those who understand this can be counted *on the fingers of one hand*—no, there's really only *one* person who understands it, so: can be counted *on one finger* [p. 41].' Or. 'My husband can eat and drink what he wants. But, as you know, *I* don't put up with his wanting anything at all, so, he can eat and drink what *I* want [p. 35].' In all these cases, then, the slip of the tongue arises from the content of the disturbed intention itself or is connected with it.

The other sort of relation between the two mutually interfering intentions seems puzzling. If the disturbing intention has nothing to do with the disturbed one, where can it have come from and why is it that it makes itself noticeable as a disturbance at this particular point? The observation which can alone give us the answer to this shows that the disturbance arises from a train of thought which has occupied the person concerned a short time before and, whether it has already been expressed in speech or not, produces this subsequent effect. It must in fact, therefore, be described as a perseveration, though not necessarily as the perseveration of spoken words. In this case too an associative link between the disturbing and the disturbed intentions is present; but it does not lie in their content but is artificially constructed, often along extremely forced associative paths.

Here is a simple example of this, derived from my own observation. I once met two Viennese ladies in the lovely Dolomites, who were dressed in walking clothes. I accompanied them part of the way, and we discussed the pleasures and also the trials of spending a holiday in that way. One of the ladies admitted that spending the day like that entailed a good deal of discomfort. 'It is certainly not at all pleasant', she said, 'if one has been tramping all day in the sun and has perspired right through one's blouse and chemise.' In this sentence she had to overcome a slight hesitation at one point. Then she continued: 'But then when one gets "nach *Hose*" and can change. . . .' This slip of the tongue was not analysed but I expect you can understand it easily. The lady's intention had obviously been to give a more complete list of her clothes, blouse, chemise and *Hose* [drawers]. Reasons of propriety led her to omit any mention of the '*Hose*'. But in the next sentence, with its quite independent

content, the unspoken word emerged as a distortion of the similar-sounding 'nach *Hause* [home]'.[1]

We can now turn, however, to the main question, which we have long postponed, of what sort of intentions these are, which find expression in this unusual fashion as disturbers of other intentions. Well, they are obviously of very different sorts, among which we must look for the common factor. If we examine a number of examples with this in view, they will soon fall into three groups. The first group contains those cases in which the disturbing purpose is known to the speaker and moreover had been noticed by him before he made the slip of the tongue. Thus, in the '*Vorschuein*' slip [p. 42] the speaker admitted not only that he had formed the judgement '*Schuein-ereien*' about the events in question, but also that he had had the intention, from which he afterwards drew back, of expressing his judgement in words. A second group is made up of other cases in which the disturbing purpose is equally recognized as his by the speaker, but in which he was unaware that it was active in him just before he made the slip. Thus, he accepts our interpretation of his slip, but nevertheless remains to some extent surprised at it. Instances of this kind of attitude can perhaps be found in other sorts of parapraxes more easily than in slips of the tongue. In a third group the interpretation of the disturbing intention is vigorously rejected by the speaker; he not only denies that it was active in him before he made the slip, but seeks to maintain that it is entirely foreign to him. You will recall the example of the 'hiccough' [p. 49] and the positively rude denial which I brought on myself from the speaker by uncovering his disturbing intention. As you know, we have not yet come to any agreement in our views on these cases. *I* should pay no attention to the denial put forward by the proposer of the toast and should persist in my interpretation unruffled, while *you*, I suppose, are still affected by his protest and raise the question of whether we ought not to give up interpreting parapraxes of this kind and regard them as purely physiological acts in the pre-analytic sense. I can well imagine what it is that deters you. My interpretation carries with it the hypothesis that

[1] [Freud later included this anecdote in the 1917 edition of *P.E.L.*, 64–5.]

intentions can find expression in a speaker of which he himself knows nothing but which I am able to infer from circumstantial evidence. You are brought up short in the face of such a novel and momentous hypothesis. I can understand that, and I see your point so far as that goes. But one thing is certain. If you want to apply consistently the view of parapraxes which has been confirmed by so many examples, you will have to make up your mind to accept the strange hypothesis I have mentioned. If you cannot do that, you will have once more to abandon the understanding of parapraxes which you have only just achieved.

Let us consider for a moment what it is that unites the three groups, what it is that the three mechanisms of slips of the tongue have in common. It is fortunately unmistakable. In the first two groups the disturbing purpose is recognized by the speaker; furthermore, in the first group that purpose announces itself immediately before the slip. But in both cases *it is forced back. The speaker decides not to put it into words, and after that the slip of the tongue occurs, after that, that is to say, the purpose which has been forced back is put into words against the speaker's will, either by altering the expression of the intention which he has permitted, or by mingling with it, or by actually taking its place.* This, then, is the mechanism of a slip of the tongue.

On my view, I can bring what happens in the *third* group into complete harmony with the mechanism I have described. I have only to assume that what distinguishes these three groups from one another is the differing extent to which the intention is forced back. In the first group the intention is there and makes itself noticed before the speaker's remark, only then is it rejected; and it takes its revenge in the slip of the tongue. In the second group the rejection goes further: the intention has already ceased to be noticeable before the remark is made. Strangely enough, this does not in the least prevent it from playing its part in causing the slip. But this behaviour makes it easier for us to explain what happens in the third group. I shall venture to assume that a purpose can also find expression in a parapraxis when it has been forced back and not noticed for a considerable time, for a very long time perhaps, and can for that reason be denied straight out by the speaker. But even if you leave the problem of the third group on one side, you are

bound to conclude from the observations we have made in the other cases that *the suppression of the speaker's intention to say something is the indispensable condition for the occurrence of a slip of the tongue.*

We may now claim to have made further advances in our understanding of parapraxes. We know not only that they are mental acts, in which we can detect sense and intention, not only that they come about through mutual interference between two different intentions, but beyond this we know that one of these intentions must have been in some way forced back from being put into effect before it can manifest itself as a disturbance of the other intention. It must itself have been disturbed before it can become a disturber. This does not mean, of course, that we have yet achieved a complete explanation of the phenomena which we call parapraxes. We see further questions immediately cropping up, and we suspect in general that the further our understanding goes the more occasions there will be for raising fresh questions. We may ask, for instance, why things should not be much simpler. If the intention is to force back a particular purpose instead of carrying it into effect, the forcing back should be successful, so that the purpose does not manifest itself at all; or on the other hand the forcing back might fail, so that the purpose that was to have been forced back would manifest itself completely. But parapraxes are the outcome of a compromise, they constitute a half-success and a half-failure for each of the two intentions; the intention which is being challenged is neither completely suppressed nor, apart from special cases, carried through quite unscathed. We may conclude that special conditions must prevail in order that an interference or compromise of this kind shall come about, but we can form no conception of what they can be. Nor do I think that we could discover these unknown factors by going deeper into the study of parapraxes. It will be necessary, rather, to examine first yet other obscure regions of mental life; it is only from analogies which we shall meet with there that we shall find the courage to set up the hypotheses necessary for throwing a more penetrating light upon parapraxes. And one thing more. Working from small indications, as we are constantly in the habit of doing in the present field, brings its own dangers. There is a mental disease, 'confabulatory paranoia', in which the exploitation of

small indications like these is carried to unlimited lengths; and I will not of course claim that conclusions built on such foundations are invariably correct. We can only be guarded against these risks by the broad basis of our observations, the repetition of similar impressions from the most varied spheres of mental life.

At this point, therefore, we will leave the analysis of parapraxes. But there is one point more to which I would draw your attention. I would ask you to bear in mind as a model the manner in which we have treated these phenomena. From this example you can learn the aims of our psychology. We seek not merely to describe and to classify phenomena, but to understand them as signs of an interplay of forces in the mind, as a manifestation of purposeful intentions working concurrently or in mutual opposition. We are concerned with a *dynamic view* of mental phenomena. On our view the phenomena that are perceived must yield in importance to trends which are only hypothetical.

We shall therefore not enter more deeply into parapraxes, but we may still undertake a cursory survey of the extent of this field, in the course of which we shall come once more upon things we already know but shall also discover some novelties. In this survey I shall keep to the division into three groups which I proposed to begin with[1] slips of the tongue together with their cognate forms slips of the pen, misreading and mishearing), forgetting, subdivided according to the objects forgotten proper names, foreign words, intentions or impressions); and bungled actions, mislaying and losing. Errors, in so far as they concern us, fall under the headings partly of forgetting and partly of bungled actions.

We have already treated *slips of the tongue* in great detail, but there are a few more points to be added. Slips of the tongue are accompanied by certain minor emotional phenomena which are not quite without interest. No one likes making slips of the

[1] [At the beginning of Lecture II (p. 24). These 'three groups' are not to be confused with the 'three groups' discussed on pp. 64–5, which relate to the quite other matter of the attitude towards slips of the tongue adopted by those who make them.]

tongue, and we often fail to hear our own slips, though never other people's. Slips of the tongue are also in a certain sense contagious; it is not at all easy to talk about slips of the tongue without making slips of the tongue oneself. The most trivial forms of such slips, precisely those which have no special light to throw on hidden mental processes, have reasons which are nevertheless not hard to penetrate. For instance, if someone has pronounced a long vowel short on account of a disturbance affecting the word for some reason or other, he will soon afterwards pronounce a subsequent short vowel long, thus making a fresh slip of the tongue to compensate for the earlier one. In the same way, if he pronounces a diphthong incorrectly and carelessly – for instance pronouncing an '*eu*' or '*oi*' as '*ei*' – he will try to make up for it by changing a subsequent '*ei*' into an '*eu*' or '*oi*'. The decisive factor here seems to be consideration of the impression made on the audience, who are not to suppose that it is a matter of indifference to the speaker how he treats his mother-tongue. The second, compensating distortion actually has the purpose of directing the hearer's attention to the first one and of assuring him that the speaker has noticed it too. The commonest, simplest and most trivial slips of the tongue are contractions and anticipations [cf. p. 32] which occur in insignificant parts of speech. For instance, in a longish sentence one may make a slip of the tongue which anticipates the last word of what one intends to say. This gives an impression of impatience to be finished with the sentence, and is evidence in general of a certain antipathy against communicating the sentence or against the whole of one's remarks. We thus arrive at marginal cases in which the distinctions between the psycho-analytic view of slips of the tongue and the ordinary physiological one melt into one another. It is to be assumed that a purpose of disturbing the intention of the speech is present in these cases but that it can only announce its presence and not what it itself has in view. The disturbance it produces then proceeds in accordance with certain phonetic influences or associative attractions and can be regarded as a distraction of the attention from the intention of the speech. But neither this disturbance of the attention nor the inclinations to associate which have become operative touch on the essence of the process. This remains, in spite of everything, the indication of the existence

of an intention which is disturbing to the intention of the speech, though the *nature* of this disturbing intention cannot be guessed from its consequences, as is possible in all the better defined cases of slips of the tongue.

Slips of the pen, to which I now pass, are so closely akin to slips of the tongue that we have nothing new to expect from them. Perhaps we may glean one little further point. The extremely common small slips of the pen, contractions and anticipations of later words (especially of final words) point, once again, to a general dislike of writing and impatience to be done with it. More marked products of miswriting enable one to recognize the nature and aim of the disturbing purpose. If one finds a slip of the pen in a letter, one knows in general that there was something the matter with its author, but one cannot always discover what was going on in him. A slip of the pen is just as often overlooked by the person responsible as is a slip of the tongue. The following is a noteworthy observation. There are, as we know, people who are in the habit of reading through every letter they write before sending it off. Others do not do this as a rule, but if, as an exception, they do so they always come across some conspicuous slip of the pen, which they can then correct. How is this to be explained? It looks as though these people knew that they had made a mistake in writing the letter. Are we really to believe this?

An interesting problem attaches to the *practical* importance of slips of the pen. You may perhaps remember the case of a murderer, H., who found the means of obtaining cultures of highly dangerous pathogenic organisms from scientific institutes by representing himself as a bacteriologist. He then used these cultures for the purpose of getting rid of his near connections by this most modern of methods. When reproached by this man complained to the Directors of one of these institutes that the cultures that had been sent to him were ineffective, but he made a slip of the pen, and instead of writing 'In my experiments on mice or guinea-pigs' he wrote quite clearly 'in my experiments on men'.[1] The doctors at the institute were struck by the slip, but, so far as I know, drew no conclusions from it. Well, what do you think? Should not the doctors, on the contrary, have taken the slip of the pen as a confession and started

[1] ['*Menschen*' instead of '*Mäusen oder Meerschweinchen*'.]

an investigation which would have put an early stop to the murderer's activities? Was not ignorance of our view of parapraxes responsible in this case for an omission of practical significance? Well, I think a slip of the pen like this would certainly have seemed to me most suspicious; but something of great importance stands in the way of using it as a confession. The matter is not as simple as all that. The slip was certainly a piece of circumstantial evidence, but it was not enough in itself to start an investigation. It is true that the slip of the pen said that he was concerned with thoughts of infecting men, but it did not make it possible to decide whether these thoughts were to be taken as a clear intention to injure or as a phantasy of no practical importance. It is even possible that a man who had made a slip like this would have every subjective justification for denying the phantasy and would repudiate it as something entirely foreign to him. You will understand these possibilities still better when later on we come to consider the distinction between psychical and material reality.[1] But this is another instance of a parapraxis acquiring importance from subsequent events. [Cf. p. 57 f. above.]

With *misreading* we come to a psychical situation which differs sensibly from that in slips of the tongue or pen. Here one of the two mutually competing purposes is replaced by a sensory stimulation and is perhaps on that account less resistant. What one is going to read is not a derivative of one's own mental life like something one proposes to write. In a great majority of cases, therefore, a misreading consists in a complete substitution. One replaces the word that is to be read by another, without there necessarily being any connection of content between the text and the product of the misreading, which depends as a rule on verbal similarity. The best member of this group is Lichtenberg's '*Agamemnon*' for '*angenommen*' [p. 39 above]. If we want to discover the disturbing purpose which produced the misreading we must leave the text that has been misread entirely aside and we may begin the analytic investigation with the two questions: what is the first association to the product of the misreading? and in what situation did the misreading occur? Occasionally a knowledge of the latter is alone enough to explain the misreading. For instance, a man under the

[1] [See the discussion in Lecture XXIII, p. 368 below.]

pressure of an imperious need was wandering about in a strange town when he saw the word '*Corset-House*' on a large notice-board on the first storey of a building. He had just enough time to feel surprised at the notice-board being placed so high up before discovering that, strictly speaking, what he should have read was '*Conset-House*'.[1] In other cases a misreading precisely of the kind which is quite independent of the content of the text may call for a detailed analysis which cannot be carried through without practice in the technique of psycho-analysis and without reliance on it. As a rule, however, it is not so hard to find the explanation of a misreading: the word substituted immediately betrays, as in the Agamemnon example, the circle of ideas from which the disturbance has arisen. In this time of war, for instance, it is a very usual thing for the names of towns and generals and the military terms that are constantly buzzing around us to be read wherever a similar word meets our eyes. Whatever interests and concerns us puts itself in the place of what is strange and still uninteresting. After-images of [earlier] thoughts trouble new perceptions.

With misreading, too, there is no lack of cases of another sort, in which the text of what is read itself arouses the disturbing purpose, which thereupon, as a rule, turns it into its opposite. What we ought to read is something unwished-for, and analysis will convince us that an intense wish to reject what we have read must be held responsible for its alteration.

In the more frequent cases of misreading which we mentioned first, we miss two factors to which we have assigned an important role in the mechanism of parapraxes: a conflict between two purposes and a forcing-back of one of them which takes its revenge by producing a parapraxis. Not that anything contrary to this occurs in misreading. But the prominence of the thought that leads to the misreading is far more noticeable than the forcing-back which it may have experienced previously.

It is these two factors which we meet with most markedly in the different situations in which parapraxes of forgetting occur. *The forgetting of intentions* is quite unambiguous; as we have already seen [p. 53], its interpretation is not disputed even by laymen. The purpose which disturbs the intention is in every

[1] [Later included in the 1917 edition of *P.E.L.*, 113–14.]

instance a counter-intention, an unwillingness; and all that remains for us to learn about it is why it has not expressed itself in some other and less disguised manner. But the presence of this counter-will[1] is unquestionable. Sometimes, too, we succeed in guessing something of the motives which compel this counter-will to conceal itself, acting surreptitiously by means of the parapraxis it always achieves its aim, whereas it would be sure of repudiation if it emerged as an open contradiction. If some important change in the psychical situation takes place between the forming of the intention and its carrying-out, as a result of which there is no longer any question of the intention being carried out, then the forgetting of the intention drops out of the category of parapraxes. It no longer seems strange to have forgotten it, and we realize that it would have been unnecessary to remember it: thereafter it becomes permanently or temporarily extinct. The forgetting of an intention can only be called a parapraxis if we cannot believe that the intention has been interrupted in this latter way.

The instances of forgetting an intention are in general so uniform and so perspicuous that for that very reason they are of no interest for our investigation. Nevertheless there are two points at which we can learn something new from a study of these parapraxes. Forgetting—that is, failure to carry out—an intention points, as we have said, to a counter-will that is hostile to it. This is no doubt true; but our enquiries show that the counter-will can be of two kinds—direct or indirect. What I mean by the latter will best appear from one or two examples. If a patron forgets to put in a word with a third person on behalf of his *protégé*, this may happen because he is not really very much interested in the *protégé*, and therefore has no great desire to speak on his behalf. In any case, that is how the *protégé* will understand the patron's forgetting [cf. p. 53]. But things may be more complicated. The counter-will in the patron against carrying out the intention may come from another direction and may be aimed at quite a different point. It may have nothing to do with the *protégé* but may perhaps be directed

[1] [The concept of a 'counter-will' played a prominent part in some of Freud's very first papers on psychopathology, e.g., in 'A Case of Successful Treatment by Hypnotism' (1892–3). It reappears at several points in *P.E.L.*]

against the third person to whom the recommendation was to have been made. So you see from this once more [cf. p. 72] the doubts that stand in the way of a practical application of our interpretations. In spite of the correct interpretation of the forgetting, the *prot* is in danger of being too distrustful and of doing his patron a grave injustice. Or, supposing someone forgets an appointment which he has promised someone else to keep, the most frequent reason for it will be, no doubt, a direct disinclination to meeting this person. But in such a case analysis might show that the disturbing purpose did not relate to him but was directed against the place at which the meeting was planned to happen and was avoided on account of a distressing memory attaching to it. Or, again, if someone forgets to post a letter, the counter-purpose may be based on the contents of the letter, but it is by no means out of the question that the letter may be harmless in itself and may only be subject to the counter-purpose because something about it recalls another letter which had been written on some earlier occasion and which offered the counter-will a direct point of attack. It can be said, therefore, that here the counter-will was transferred from the earlier letter, which justified it, to the present one, which it had in fact no grounds for concern about. You see, then, that we must practise restraint and foresight in applying our interpretations, justified as they are: things that are psychologically equivalent may in practice have a great variety of meanings.

Phenomena such as these last may seem to you most unusual, and you will perhaps be inclined to suppose that an 'indirect' counter-will already indicates that the process is a pathological one. But I can assure you that it occurs as well within the limits of what is normal and healthy. Moreover you should not misunderstand me. I am far from asserting that our analytic interpretations are untrustworthy. The ambiguities in the forgetting of intentions which I have been mentioning exist only so long as we have not made an analysis of the case and are only making our interpretations on the basis of our general assumptions. If we carry out an analysis upon the person in question, we invariably learn with sufficient certainty whether the counter-will is a direct one or what other origin it may have.

The second point I have in mind [cf. p. 72] is this. If in a large majority of instances we find confirmation of the fact that

the forgetting of an intention goes back to a counter-will, we grow bold enough to extend the solution to another set of instances in which the person under analysis does not confirm but denies the counter-will we have inferred. Take as examples of this such extremely common events as forgetting to return books one has been lent or to pay bills or debts. We shall venture to insist to the person concerned that an intention exists in him to keep the books and not to pay the debts, while he will deny this intention but will not be able to produce any other explanation of his behaviour. Thereupon we shall go on to say that he has this intention but knows nothing about it, but that it is enough for us that it reveals its presence by producing the forgetting in him. He may repeat to us that he has in fact forgotten. You will now recognize the situation as one in which we found ourselves once before [p. 64]. If we want to pursue our interpretations of parapraxes, which have so frequently proved justified, to a consistent conclusion, we are forced to the inescapable hypothesis that there are purposes in people which can become operative without their knowing about them. But this brings us into opposition to all the views that dominate both ordinary life and psychology.

The forgetting of proper names and foreign names, as well as of foreign words, can similarly be traced back to a counter-intention, which is aimed either directly or indirectly against the name concerned. I have already given you several instances of direct dislike [p. 52]. But indirect causation is particularly frequent in these cases and can usually only be established by careful analyses. For instance, during the present war, which has obliged us to give up so many of our former enjoyments, our power of remembering proper names has suffered greatly as the result of the strangest associations. A short time ago I found that I was unable to reproduce the name of the innocent Moravian town of *Brenz*; and analysis showed that what was responsible for this was not any direct hostility to it but its resemblance in sound to the name of the Palazzo *Buonri* in Orvieto which I had repeatedly enjoyed visiting in the past.[1] Here for the first time, in this reason for objecting to remembering a name, we come across a principle which will later on reveal its enormous importance for the causation of neurotic

[1] [This example was added in 1917 to *P.E.L.*, 34.]

symptoms: the memory's disinclination to remembering anything which is connected with feelings of unpleasure and the reproduction of which would renew the unpleasure. This intention to avoid unpleasure arising from a recollection or from other psychical acts, this psychical flight from unpleasure, may be recognized as the ultimate operative motive not only for the forgetting of names but for many other parapraxes, such as omissions, errors, and so on.

The forgetting of names, however, seems particularly facilitated psycho-physiologically, and for that reason cases occur in which interference by the unpleasure motive cannot be confirmed. If someone has a tendency to forget names, analytic investigation will show that names escape him not only because he does not like them themselves or because they remind him of something disagreeable, but also because in his case the same name belongs to another circle of associations with which he is more intimately related. The name is, as it were, anchored there and is kept from contact with the other associations which have been momentarily activated. If you recall the tricks of mnemotechnics,[1] you will realize with some surprise that the same chains of association which are deliberately laid down in order to *prevent* names from being forgotten can also *lead* to our forgetting them. The most striking example of this is afforded by the proper names of persons, which naturally possess quite different psychical importance for different people. Let us, for instance, take a first name such as Theodore. To one of you it will have no special meaning, to another it will be the name of his father or brother or of a friend, or his own name. Analytic experience will then show you that the first of these people is in no danger of forgetting that a particular stranger bears this name, whereas the others will be constantly inclined to withhold from strangers a name which seems to them reserved for intimate connections. If you now bear in mind that this associative inhibition may coincide with the operation of the unpleasure principle[2] and, besides that, with an indirect

[1] [Artificial methods of improving the memory—e.g. 'Pelmanism'.]

[2] [Since the time of *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*) where the principle is so named—e.g. *Standard Ed.*, **5**, 600—Freud had almost invariably spoken of the 'pleasure principle'. It is discussed under this latter name in Lecture XXII, p. 356 f. below.]

mechanism, you will be in a position to form an adequate idea of the complications in the causation of the temporary forgetting of a name. An appropriate analysis will however unravel every one of these tangles for you.

The forgetting of impressions and experiences demonstrates much more clearly and exclusively than the forgetting of names the operation of the purpose of keeping disagreeable things out of memory. The whole field of this kind of forgetting does not, of course, fall within the class of parapraxes, but only such cases as, measured by the standard of our usual experience, seem to us striking and unjustified: for instance, when the forgetting affects impressions that are too fresh or important, or when the missing memory tears a gap in what is otherwise a well-remembered chain of events. Why and in what way we are able to forget in general, and among other things experiences which have certainly left the deepest impression upon us, such as the events of our earliest childhood years,—that is quite another problem, in which fending off unpleasurable impulses plays a certain part but is far from being the whole explanation.[1] It is an undoubted fact that disagreeable impressions are easily forgotten. Various psychologists have noticed it and the great Darwin was so much impressed by it that he made it 'a golden rule' to note down with especial care any observations which seemed unfavourable to his theory, since he had convinced himself that precisely they would not remain in his memory.[2]

A person who hears for the first time of this principle of the fending off of unpleasurable memories by forgetting rarely fails to object that on the contrary it has been his experience that distressing things are particularly hard to forget but keep on returning to torment him against his will—memories, for instance, of insults and humiliations. This is also a true fact, but the objection is not to the point. It is important to begin in good time to reckon with the fact that mental life is the arena and battle-ground for mutually opposing purposes or, to put

[1] [Infantile amnesia is discussed in Lecture XIII, p. 199 f. below. For a discussion of forgetting in general, see a long footnote added to *P.E.L.*, 274, in 1907.]

[2] [The whole passage from Darwin's autobiography (1908, 123) is quoted *P.F.L.*, 141.]

it non-dynamically, that it consists of contradictions and pairs of contraries. Proof of the existence of a particular purpose is no argument against the existence of an opposite one; there is room for both. It is only a question of the attitude of these contraries to each other, and of what effects are produced by the one and by the other.

Losing and mislaying are of particular interest to us owing to the many meanings they may have owing, that is, to the multiplicity of the purposes which can be served by these parapraxes. All cases have in common the fact that there was a wish to lose something; they differ in the basis and aim of that wish. We lose a thing when it is worn out, when we intend to replace it by a better one, when we no longer like it, when it originates from someone with whom we are no longer on good terms or when we acquired it in circumstances we no longer want to recall. [Cf. p. 54.] Dropping, damaging or breaking the object can serve the same purpose. In the sphere of social life experience is said to have shown that unwanted and illegitimate children are far more frail than those legitimately conceived. The crude technique of baby-farmers[1] is not necessary for bringing about this result; a certain amount of neglect in looking after the children should be quite sufficient. The preserving of *things* may be subject to the same influences as that of children.

Things may, however, be condemned to be lost without their value having suffered any diminution when, that is, there is an intention to sacrifice something to Fate in order to ward off some other dreaded loss. Analysis tells us that it is still quite a common thing among us to exorcize Fate in this way; and thus our losing is often a voluntary sacrifice. In the same way, losing may also serve the purpose of defiance or self-punishment. In short, the more remote reasons for the intention to get rid of a thing by losing it are beyond number.

Bungled actions, like other errors, are often used to fulfil wishes which one ought to deny oneself. Here the intention disguises itself as a lucky accident. For instance, as happened to one of my friends, a man may be due, obviously against his will,

[1] [In the original literally: 'what are known as angel-makers'.]

to go by train to visit someone near the town where he lives, and then, at a junction where he has to change, may by mistake get into a train that takes him back to where he came from. Or someone on a journey may be anxious to make a stop at an intermediate station but may be forbidden from doing so by other obligations, and he may then overlook or miss some connection so that he is after all obliged to break his journey in the way he wished. Or what happened to one of my patients. I had forbidden him to telephone to the girl he was in love with, and then, when he meant to telephone to me, he asked for the wrong number 'by mistake' or 'while he was thinking of something else' and suddenly found himself connected to the girl's number.[1] A good example of an outright blunder, and one of practical importance, is provided by an observation made by an engineer in his account of what preceded a case of material damage:

'Some time ago I worked with several students in the laboratory of the technical college on a series of complicated experiments in elasticity, a piece of work which we had undertaken voluntarily but which was beginning to take up more time than we had expected. One day as I returned to the laboratory with my friend F., he remarked how annoying it was to him to lose so much time on that particular day as he had so much else to do at home. I could not help agreeing with him and added half jokingly, referring to an incident the week before: "Let us hope that the machine will go wrong again so that we can stop work and go home early."

'In arranging the work it happened that F. was given the regulation of the valve of the press; that is to say, he was, by cautiously opening the valve, to let the fluid under pressure flow slowly out of the accumulator into the cylinder of the hydraulic press. The man conducting the experiment stood by the manometer and when the right pressure was reached called out a loud "Stop!" At the word of command F. seized the valve and turned it with all his might—to the left! (All valves without exception are closed by being turned to the right.) This caused the full pressure of the accumulator to come suddenly on to the press, a strain for which the connecting-pipes are not designed, so that one of them immediately burst—quite

[1] [These last three examples are described much more fully *P.F.L.*, 222 and 226–8.]

a harmless accident to the machine, but enough to oblige us to suspend work for the day and go home.

'It is characteristic, by the way, that when we were discussing the affair some time later my friend F. had no recollection whatever of my remark, which I recalled with certainty.'[1]

This may lead you to suspect that it is not always just an innocent chance that turns the hands of your domestic servants into dangerous enemies of your household belongings. And you may also raise the question whether it is always a matter of chance when people injure themselves and risk their own safety. These are notions whose value you may care to test, if occasion arises, by analysing observations of your own.

This, Ladies and Gentlemen, is far from being all that might be said about parapraxes. Much remains that might be examined and discussed. But I am satisfied if our discussion of the subject so far has to some extent shaken your previous views and has made you a little prepared to accept new ones. I am content, for the rest, to leave you faced with an unclarified situation. We cannot establish all our doctrines from a study of parapraxes and we are not obliged to draw our evidence from that material alone. The great value of parapraxes for our purposes lies in their being very common phenomena which, moreover, can easily be observed in oneself, and which can occur without the slightest implication of illness. There is only one of your unanswered questions which I should like to put into words before I end. If, as we have found from many instances, people come so close to an understanding of parapraxes and so often behave as though they grasped their sense, how is it possible that they none the less set down these same phenomena as being in general chance events without sense or meaning, and that they can oppose the psycho-analytic elucidation of them with so much vigour?

You are right. This is a remarkable fact and it calls for an explanation. But I will not give you one. Instead, I will introduce you by degrees to fields of knowledge from which the explanation will force itself upon you without any contribution of mine.

[1] [Reproduced from *P.E.L.*, 174.]

PART II

DREAMS

(1916 [1915–16])

LECTURE V

DIFFICULTIES AND FIRST APPROACHES

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—It was discovered one day that the pathological symptoms of certain neurotic patients have a sense.[1] On this discovery the psycho-analytic method of treatment was founded. It happened in the course of this treatment that patients, instead of bringing forward their symptoms, brought forward dreams. A suspicion thus arose that the dreams too had a sense.[2]

We will not, however, follow this historical path, but will proceed in the opposite direction. We will demonstrate the sense of dreams by way of preparing for the study of the neuroses. This reversal is justified, since the study of dreams is not only the best preparation for the study of the neuroses, but dreams are themselves a neurotic symptom, which, moreover, offers us the priceless advantage of occurring in all healthy people.[3] Indeed, supposing all human beings were healthy, so long as they dreamt we could arrive from their dreams at almost all the discoveries which the investigation of the neuroses has led to.

Dreams, then, have become a subject of psycho-analytic

[1] By Josef Breuer in the years 1880–2. Cf. the lectures delivered by me in America in 1909, *Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* [1910*a*], and 'On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement' [1914*d*].

[2] [Freud's major work on the subject of dreams was, of course, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*), *Standard Ed.*, 4 and 5. There is, however, scarcely one of his writings in which the topic did not emerge, but a list of the principal discussions of it is given in an Appendix to that work (ibid., 5, 626). A considerable number of references to it will be found in editorial footnotes to the present set of lectures, and, to save space, the abbreviation '*I. of D.*' will be used, with application in every case to Volumes IV and V of the *Standard Edition*. It may be noted that the pagination of the text of the latest separate editions of the work (London, Allen and Unwin, 1955 and New York, Basic Books, 1955) is identical with that of the *Standard Edition* volumes.]

[3] [Freud discussed this further towards the end of the last lecture of the series (p. 456 f., below).]

research: once again ordinary phenomena, with little value set on them, and apparently of no practical use like parapraxes, with which indeed they have in common the fact of occurring in healthy people. But apart from this the conditions for our work are a good deal less favourable here. Parapraxes had merely been neglected by science, little attention had been paid to them; but at least there was no harm in concerning oneself with them. 'No doubt', people would say, 'there are more important things. But something may possibly come of it.' But to concern oneself with dreams is not merely unpractical and uncalled-for, it is positively disgraceful. It brings with it the odium of being unscientific and rouses the suspicion of a personal inclination to mysticism. Imagine a medical man going in for dreams when there are so many more serious things even in neuropathology and psychiatry: tumours as big as apples compressing the organ of the mind, haemorrhages, chronic inflammation, in all of which the changes in the tissues can be demonstrated under the microscope! No, dreams are much too trivial, and unworthy to be an object of research.

And there is something else which from its very nature frustrates the requirements of exact research. In investigating dreams one is not even certain about the object of one's research. A delusion, for instance, meets one squarely and with definite outlines. 'I am the Emperor of China', says the patient straight out. But dreams? As a rule no account at all can be given of them. If anyone gives an account of a dream, has he any guarantee that his account has been correct, or that he may not, on the contrary, have altered his account in the course of giving it and have been obliged to invent some addition to it to make up for the indistinctness of his recollection? Most dreams cannot be remembered at all and are forgotten except for small fragments. And is the interpretation of material of this kind to serve as the basis of a scientific psychology or as a method for treating patients?

An excess of criticism may make us suspicious. These objections to dreams as an object of research are obviously carried too far. We have already dealt with the question of unimportance in connection with parapraxes [p. 26 f.]. We have told ourselves that big things can show themselves by small indications. As regards their indistinctness—that is one of the charac-

teristics of dreams, like any other: we cannot lay down for things what their characteristics are to be. And incidentally there are clear and distinct dreams as well. There are, moreover, other objects of psychiatric research which suffer from the same characteristic of indistinctness—in many instances, for example, obsessions, and these have been dealt with, after all, by respected and esteemed psychiatrists.[1] I recall the last such case that I came across in my medical practice. This was a woman patient who introduced herself with these words. 'I have a sort of feeling as though I had injured or had wanted to injure some living creature—a child?—no, more like a dog—as though I may have thrown it off a bridge, or something else.' We can help to overcome the defect of the uncertainty in remembering dreams if we decide that whatever the dreamer tells us must count as his dream, without regard to what he may have forgotten or have altered in recalling it. And finally it cannot even be maintained so sweepingly that dreams are unimportant things. We know from our own experience that the mood in which one wakes up from a dream may last for the whole day; doctors have observed cases in which a mental disease has started with a dream and in which a delusion originating in the dream has persisted; historical figures are reported to have embarked on momentous enterprises in response to dreams. We may therefore ask what may be the true source of the contempt in which dreams are held in scientific circles.

It is, I believe, a reaction against the overvaluation of dreams in earlier days. The reconstruction of the past is, as we know, no easy matter, but we may assume with certainty, if I may put it as a joke, that our ancestors three thousand or more years ago already had dreams like ours. So far as we know, all the peoples of antiquity attached great significance to dreams and thought they could be used for practical purposes. They deduced signs for the future from them and searched in them for auguries. For the Greeks and other oriental nations, there may have been times when a campaign without dream-interpreters seemed as

[1] [The tendency of obsessional neurotics to uncertainty and vagueness had been discussed by Freud in Section B of Part II of his 'Notes upon a Case of Obsessional Neurosis' (1909*d*). See also the account of that form of illness in Lecture XVII, p. 258 ff. below.]

impossible as one without air-reconnaissance seems to-day. When Alexander the Great started on his conquests, his train included the most famous dream-interpreters. The city of Tyre, which at that time still stood on an island, offered the king such a stiff resistance that he considered the possibility of raising the siege. Then one night he had a dream of a satyr who seemed to be dancing in triumph, and when he reported it to his dream-interpreters they informed him that it foretold his conquest of the city. He ordered an assault and captured Tyre.[1] Among the Etruscans and Romans other methods of foretelling the future were in use, but throughout the whole of the Hellenistic-Roman period the interpretation of dreams was practised and highly esteemed. Of the literature dealing with the subject the principal work at least has survived: the book by Artemidorus of Daldis, who probably lived during the reign of the Emperor Hadrian.[2] How it came about after this that the art of interpreting dreams declined and that dreams fell into discredit I cannot tell you. The spread of enlightenment cannot have had much to do with it, for many things more absurd than the dream-interpretation of antiquity were faithfully preserved in the obscurity of the Middle Ages. The first remains that interest in dreams gradually sank to the level of superstition and could survive only among the uneducated classes. The final abuse of dream-interpretation was reached in our days with attempts to discover from dreams the numbers fated to be drawn in the game of lotto.[3] On the other hand the exact science of to-day has repeatedly concerned itself with dreams but always with the sole aim of applying its physiological theories to them. Medical men, of course, looked on dreams as non-psychical acts, as the expression in mental life of somatic stimuli. Burdach [1837,][35] pronounced that dreams are 'somatic processes, which are in every case useless and in many cases positively pathological, to which the soul of the universe and immortality are as sublimely superior as the blue sky above some weed-grown, low-lying stretch of sand.' Maury [1878, 50] compares dreams to the disordered twitchings of St. Vitus's

[1] [The explanation of this dream is given in Lecture XV, p. 236 below.]

[2] [Some account of this work appears in *S.E.*, 4, 3 and 93 *n.*]

[3] [Something very similar to what is now known as 'Bingo'.]

dance as contrasted with the co-ordinated movements of a healthy man. According to an old analogy, the contents of a dream are like the sounds produced when 'the ten fingers of a man who knows nothing of music wander over the keys of a piano' [Strümpell, 1877, 84].

Interpreting means finding a hidden sense in something; there can of course be no question of doing that if we adopt this last estimate of the function of dreams. Look at the description of dreams given by Wundt [1874], Jodl [1896], and other more recent philosophers. They content themselves with enumerating the respects in which dream-life differs from waking thought, always in a sense depreciatory to dreams—emphasizing the fact that associations are broken apart, that the critical faculty ceases to work, that all knowledge is eliminated, as well as other signs of diminished functioning. The only valuable contribution to the knowledge of dreams for which we have to thank exact science relates to the effect produced on the content of dreams by the impact of somatic stimuli during sleep. A recently deceased Norwegian author, J. Mourly Vold, published two stout volumes of experimental researches into dreams (German translation, 1910 and 1912), which are devoted almost exclusively to the consequences of alterations in the posture of the limbs. They have been recommended to us as models of exact research into dreams. Can you imagine what exact science would say if it learnt that we want to make an attempt to discover the *sense* of dreams? Perhaps it has already said it. But we will not let ourselves be frightened off. If it was possible for parapraxes to have a sense, dreams can have one too; and in a great many cases parapraxes *have* a sense, which has escaped exact science. So let us embrace the prejudice of the ancients and of the people and let us follow in the footsteps of the dream-interpreters of antiquity.

We must begin by finding our bearings in the task before us and taking a general survey of the field of dreams. What, then, is a dream? It is hard to answer in a single sentence. But we will not attempt a definition when it is enough to point to something familiar to everyone.[1] We should, however, bring the essential feature of dreams into prominence. Where is that

[1] [Cf., however, some remarks on this in Lecture XIV, p. 233 below.]

to be found, though? There are such immense differences within the frame that comprises our subject differences in every direction. The essential feature will presumably be something that we can point to as common to all dreams.

The first thing common to all dreams would seem to be, of course, that we are asleep during them. Dreaming is evidently mental life during sleep something which has certain resemblances to waking mental life but which, on the other hand, is distinguished from it by large differences. This was, long ago, Aristotle's definition [1] It may be that there are still closer connections between dreams and sleep. We can be woken by a dream; we very often have a dream when we wake up spontaneously or if we are forcibly aroused from sleep. Thus dreams seem to be an intermediate state between sleeping and waking. So our attention is turned to sleep. Well, then, what is sleep?

That is a physiological or biological problem about which much is still in dispute On that we can come to no conclusion; but we ought, I think, to try to describe the psychological characteristics of sleep. Sleep is a state in which I want to know nothing of the external world, in which I have taken my interest away from it. I put myself to sleep by withdrawing from the external world and keeping its stimuli away from me. I also go to sleep when I am fatigued by it. So when I go to sleep I say to the external world, 'Leave me in peace: I want to go to sleep.' On the contrary, children say, 'I'm not going to sleep yet; I'm not tired, and I want to have some more experiences.' The biological purpose of sleep seems therefore to be rehabilitation, and its psychological characteristic suspense of interest in the world. Our relation to the world, into which we have come so unwillingly, seems to involve our not being able to tolerate it uninterruptedly. Thus from time to time we withdraw into the premundane state, into existence in the womb. At any rate, we arrange conditions for ourselves very like what they were then: warm, dark and free from stimuli. Some of us roll ourselves up into a tight package and, so as to sleep, take up a posture much as it was in the womb. The world, it seems, does not possess even those of us who are adults completely, but only up to two thirds, one third of us is still quite unborn. Every time we wake in the morning it is like a new

[1] [Cf. *I. of D.*, 4, 2 3.]

birth. Indeed, in speaking of our state after sleep, we say that we feel as though we were newly born. (In saying this, incidentally, we are making what is probably a very false assumption about the general sensations of a new-born child, who seems likely, on the contrary, to be feeling very uncomfortable.) We speak, too, of being born as 'first seeing the light of day'.[1]

If this is what sleep is, dreams cannot possibly form part of its programme, but seem on the contrary to be an unwelcome addition to it. In our opinion too, a dreamless sleep is the best, the only proper one. There ought to be no mental activity in sleep; if it begins to stir, we have not succeeded in establishing the foetal state of rest, we have not been able entirely to avoid residues of mental activity. Dreaming would consist in these residues. But if so, it would really seem that there is no need for dreams to have any sense. It was different with parapraxes; they, after all, were activities during waking life. But if I am asleep and have stopped mental activity completely and have merely failed to suppress some residues of it, then there is no need whatever for these residues to have any sense. I cannot even make use of any such sense, since the rest of my mental life is asleep. So it really can only be a matter of reactions, in the nature of 'twitchings', of mental phenomena such as result directly from a somatic stimulus. Dreams would accordingly be residues of waking mental activity which were disturbing sleep, and we might well decide to drop the subject at once, as not being suited to psycho-analysis.

Even if dreams are superfluous, however, they do exist, and we can try to account for their existence. Why does mental life fail to go to sleep? Probably because there is something that will not allow the mind any peace. Stimuli impinge upon it and it must react to them. A dream, then, is the manner in which the mind reacts to stimuli that impinge upon it in the state of sleep. And here we see a way of access to an understanding of dreams. We can take various dreams and try to discover what the stimulus was which was seeking to disturb sleep and to which the reaction was a dream. Our examination of the first thing common to all dreams seems to have taken us so far.

Is there anything else common to them? Yes, something

[1] [In German, literally, 'seeing the light of the world'.]

unmistakable but much harder to grasp and to describe. Mental processes in sleep have a quite different character from those of waking life. We experience every sort of thing in dreams and believe in it, whereas nevertheless we experience nothing, except, perhaps, the single disturbing stimulus. We experience it predominantly in visual images; feelings may be present too, and thoughts interwoven in it as well; the other senses may also experience something, but nonetheless it is predominantly a question of images. Part of the difficulty of giving an account of dreams is due to our having to translate these images into words. 'I could draw it', a dreamer often says to us, 'but I don't know how to say it.' This is not, however, a *reduced* mental activity, like that of a feeble-minded person as compared to that of a genius: it is *qualitatively* different, though it is hard to say where the difference lies. G. T. Fechner once voiced a suspicion that the scene of action of dreams (in the mind) is different from that of waking ideational life.[1] Though we do not understand this and do not know what we are to make of it, it does in fact reproduce the impression of strangeness which most dreams make on us. The comparison between dream-activity and the effects of an unmusical hand on the piano [p. 87] does not help us here. The piano will after all respond with the same sounds, though not with tunes, to any chance pressure on its keys. Let us carefully bear this second thing common to all dreams in mind, even though we may not have understood it.

Are there any other things common to them? I cannot discover any; I can see nothing anywhere but differences, and differences in all kinds of ways: in their apparent duration, as well as in their clarity, in the amount of affect accompanying them, in the possibility of retaining them, and so on. This variety is not in fact what we might expect to find in a mere defensive reaction to a stimulus, something mechanically imposed, an empty thing, like the twitchings of St. Vitus's dance. As regards the dimensions of dreams, some are very short and comprise only a single image or a few, a single thought, or even a single word, others are uncommonly rich in their

[1] [The psycho-physiologist Fechner (1801–87) had a great influence on Freud's theories; see his *Autobiographical Study* (1925*d*), *Standard Ed.*, **20**, 59–74. The present remark is discussed in *I. of D.*, **4**, 43 and **5**, 533–6.

content, present whole novels and seem to last a long time. There are dreams which are as clear as [waking] experience, so clear that quite a time after waking we do not realize that they were dreams; and there are others which are indescribably dim, shadowy and blurred. Indeed in one and the same dream excessively definite portions may alternate with others of scarcely discernible vagueness. Dreams may be entirely sensible or at least coherent, witty even, or fantastically beautiful; others, again, are confused, feeble-minded as it were, absurd, often positively crazy. There are dreams that leave us quite cold and others in which affects of all kinds are manifest – pain to the point of tears, anxiety to the point of waking us up, astonishment, delight, and so on. Dreams are usually quickly forgotten after waking, or they may last through the day, remembered more and more dimly and incompletely till evening; others, again – for instance, childhood dreams – are so well preserved that after thirty years they remain in the memory like some fresh experience. Dreams may appear, like individuals, on a single occasion only and never again, or they may recur in the same person unchanged or with small divergences. In short, this fragment of mental activity during the night has an immense repertory at its disposal; it is capable, in fact, of all that the mind creates in daytime – yet it is never the same thing.

We might try to account for these many variations in dreams by supposing that they correspond to different intermediate stages between sleeping and waking, different degrees of incomplete sleep. Yes, but if this were so, the value, content and clarity of a dream's product – and the awareness, too, of its being a dream – would have to increase in dreams in which the mind was coming near to waking; and it would not be possible for a clear and rational fragment of dream to be immediately followed by one that was senseless and obscure and for this in turn to be followed by another good piece. The mind could certainly not alter the depth of its sleep so quickly as that. So this explanation is of no help, there can be no short cut out of the difficulty.

We will for the moment leave on one side the 'sense' of dreams, and try to make our way to a better understanding of them from what we have found as common to them. We inferred

from the relation of dreams to the state of sleep that dreams are the reaction to a stimulus which disturbs sleep. We have learnt that this too is the single point on which exact experimental psychology is able to come to our assistance: it brings us evidence that stimuli which impinge during sleep make their appearance in dreams. Many investigations of this kind have been made, most recently those by Mourly Vold which I have already mentioned [p. 87], and each of us, no doubt, has been in a position to confirm this finding from personal observation. I will select a few of the earlier experiments. Maury [1878] had some experiments performed on himself. He was given some eau-de-cologne to smell in his sleep. He dreamt he was in Cairo, in Johann Maria Farina's shop, and some further absurd adventures followed. Or, he was pinched lightly on the neck; he dreamt of a mustard plaster being applied to him and of a doctor who had treated him as a child. Or again, a drop of water was dropped on his forehead; he was in Italy, was sweating violently and was drinking white Orvieto wine [1]

The striking thing about these experimentally produced dreams will perhaps be even more plainly visible in another series of stimulus-dreams. They are three dreams reported by an intelligent observer, Hildebrandt [1875], all of them reactions to the ringing of an alarm-clock:

'I dreamt, then, that one spring morning I was going for a walk and was strolling through the green fields till I came to a neighbouring village, where I saw the villagers in their best clothes, with hymn-books under their arms, flocking to the church. Of course! It was Sunday, and early morning service would soon be beginning. I decided I would attend it; but first, as I was rather hot from walking, I went into the churchyard which surrounded the church, to cool down. While I was reading some of the tombstones, I heard the bell-ringer climbing up the church tower and at the top of it I now saw the little village bell which would presently give the signal for the beginning of devotions. For quite a while it hung there motionless, then it began to swing, and suddenly its peal began to ring out clear and piercing — so clear and piercing that it put an end to my sleep. But what was ringing was the alarm-clock.

[1] [For these and several other of Maury's experiments see *I. of D.*, 4, 25.]

'Here is another instance. It was a bright winter's day and the streets were covered with deep snow. I had agreed to join a party for a sleigh-ride; but I had to wait a long time before news came that the sleigh was at the door. Now followed the preparations for getting in—the fur rug spread out, the foot-muff put ready—and at last I was sitting in my seat. But even then the moment of departure was delayed till a pull at the reins gave the waiting horses the signal. Then off they started, and, with a violent shake, the sleigh bells broke into their familiar jingle—with such violence, in fact, that in a moment the cobweb of my dream was torn through. And once again it was only the shrill sound of the alarm-clock.

'And now yet a third example. I saw a kitchenmaid, carrying several dozen plates piled on one another, walking along the passage to the dining room. The column of china in her arms seemed to me in danger of losing its balance. "Take care," I exclaimed, "or you'll drop the whole load." The inevitable rejoinder duly followed: she was quite accustomed to that kind of job, and so on. And meanwhile my anxious looks followed the advancing figure. Then—just as I expected—she stumbled at the threshold and the fragile crockery slipped and rattled and clattered in a hundred pieces on the floor. But the noise continued without ceasing, and soon it seemed no longer to be a clattering; it was turning into a ringing—and the ringing, as my waking self now became aware, was only the alarm-clock doing its duty.'[1]

These are very nice dreams, entirely sensible and by no means as incoherent as dreams are usually apt to be. I am not objecting to them on that account. What they have in common is that in each case the situation ends in a noise, which, when the dreamer wakes up, is recognized as being made by the alarm-clock. So we see here how a dream is produced; but we learn something more than this. The dream does not recognize the alarm-clock—nor does it appear in the dream—but it replaces the noise of the alarm-clock by another; it interprets the stimulus which is bringing sleep to an end, but it interprets it differently each time. Why does it do that? There is no answer to this; it seems a matter of caprice. Understanding the dream would mean being able to say why this particular noise and

[1] [Also quoted in *I. of D.*, 4, 27–8.]

none other was chosen for the interpretation of the stimulus from the alarm-clock. We may make an analogous objection to Maury's experiments: we can see quite clearly that the impinging stimulus appears in the dream, but why it should take this particular form we are not told, and it does not seem by any means to follow from the nature of the stimulus that disturbed sleep. In Maury's experiments, too, a quantity of other dream-material usually appears in addition to the direct effect of the stimulus – for instance, the 'absurd adventures' in the eau-de-cologne dream –, which cannot be accounted for.

And now consider that *arousal* dreams offer the best chance of establishing the influence of external sleep-disturbing stimuli. In most other cases it will become more difficult. We do not wake out of every dream, and if we remember a dream of the past night in the morning, how are we to discover a disturbing stimulus which may perhaps have made its impact on us during the night? I once succeeded in identifying a sound-stimulus of that kind retrospectively, but only, of course, owing to special circumstances. I woke up one morning in a mountain resort in the Tyrol, knowing I had had a dream that the Pope was dead. I could not explain the dream to myself, but later on my wife asked me if I had heard the fearful noise made by the pealing of bells towards morning which had broken out from all the churches and chapels. No, I had heard nothing, my sleep is more resistant than hers; but thanks to her information I understood my dream.[1] How often may stimuli of this kind instigate dreams in a sleeper without his getting news of them afterwards? Perhaps very often, but perhaps not. If the stimulus can no longer be pointed to, we cannot be convinced of its existence. And in any case we have changed our view of the importance of external stimuli that disturb sleep since we learnt that they can explain only a small portion of the dream and not the whole dream-reaction.

There is no need to give up this theory entirely on that account. Moreover it is capable of extension. It is obviously a matter of indifference what it is that disturbs sleep or instigates the mind to dream. If it cannot invariably be a sensory stimulus coming from outside, there may instead be what is called a somatic stimulus, arising from the internal organs. This is a

[1] [Told at greater length, *I. of D.*, 4, 232.]

very plausible notion and agrees with the most popular view of the origin of dreams: 'dreams come from indigestion', people often say. Here too unluckily we must often suspect that there are cases when a somatic stimulus which has impinged on a sleeper during the night is no longer manifest after waking and can therefore not be proved to have occurred. But we shall not overlook the number of clear experiences which support the origin of dreams from somatic stimuli. In general, there can be no doubt that the condition of the internal organs can influence dreams. The relation of the content of some dreams to an overfull bladder or to a state of excitation of the genital organs is too plain to be mistaken. These clear cases lead to others in which the content of the dreams give rise to a justifiable suspicion that there has been an impact from somatic stimuli because there is something in the content which can be regarded as a working-over, a representation or an interpretation of such stimuli. Scherner (1861), who made researches into dreams, argued particularly strongly in favour of this derivation of dreams and brought forward some good examples of it. For instance, in one dream he saw 'two rows of pretty boys with fair hair and delicate complexions facing one another in pugnacious array, making an onset and attacking one another, and then drawing back and taking up their old position again, and then starting the whole business once more.' His interpretation of these two rows of boys as teeth is plausible in itself and seems fully confirmed when we learn that after this scene the dreamer 'pulled a long tooth out of his jaw.'[1] Similarly, the interpretation of 'long, narrow, winding passages' as derived from an intestinal stimulus seems valid, and confirms the assertion by Scherner that dreams seek above all to represent the organ that sends out the stimulus by objects resembling it.

Thus we must be prepared to admit that internal stimuli can play the same part in dreams as external ones. Any estimate of their importance is unfortunately open to the same objections. In a large number of cases an interpretation pointing to a somatic stimulus is uncertain or unprovable. Not all dreams, but only a certain number of them give rise to a suspicion that internal organic stimuli had a share in their origin. And lastly, internal somatic stimuli are as little able as external sensory

[1] [*I. of D.*, 4, 227.]

stimuli to explain more of a dream than what corresponds in it to a direct reaction to the stimulus. Where the rest of the dream comes from remains obscure.

Let us notice, however, one peculiarity of dream-life which comes to light in this study of the effects of stimuli. Dreams do not simply reproduce the stimulus; they work it over, they make allusions to it, they include it in some context, they replace it by something else. This is a side of the dream-work[1] which is bound to interest us since it may perhaps bring us nearer to the essence of dreams. When a person constructs something as a result of a stimulus, the stimulus need not on that account exhaust the whole of the work. Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, for instance, was a *pièce d'occasion* composed to celebrate the accession of the king who first united the crowns of the three kingdoms. But does this immediate historical occasion cover the content of the tragedy? Does it explain its greatnesses and its enigmas? It may be that the external and internal stimuli, too, impinging on the sleeper, are only the *instigators* of the dream and will accordingly betray nothing to us of its essence.

The second thing that is common to dreams, their psychical peculiarity [p. 89 f.], is on the one hand hard to grasp and on the other offers us no starting-point for further enquiry. We experience things in dreams as a rule in visual forms. Can the stimuli throw any light on this? Is what we experience in fact the stimulus? But, if so, why is the experience visual, while it is only in the rarest cases that optical stimulation has instigated the dream? Or if we dream spoken words, can it be shown that during sleep a conversation, or some noise resembling one, made its way into our ears? I venture to dismiss that possibility decisively.

If we can get no further with what is common to dreams, let us see whether their differences can help us. Dreams are, of course, often senseless, confused and absurd; but there are also sensible, matter-of-fact, and reasonable ones. Let us enquire whether the latter, the sensible ones, can throw any light on the senseless ones. Here is the latest reasonable dream that I

[1] [The process which transforms the latent thoughts behind the dream into its manifest form. This is the subject of Lecture XI below.]

have had reported to me. It was dreamt by a young man: 'I went for a walk along the Karntnerstrasse[1] and met Herr X. there and joined him for a time. Then I went into a restaurant. Two ladies and a gentleman came and sat at my table. I was annoyed at this to begin with and wouldn't look at them. Then I did look and found that they were quite nice.' The dreamer commented on this that on the evening before the dream he had in fact walked along the Karntnerstrasse, which is the way he usually goes, and had met Herr X. there. The other part of the dream was not a direct recollection, and only had some similarity to an experience a considerable time earlier. Or here is another matter-of-fact dream, this time a lady's: 'Her husband asked her, "Don't you think we ought to have the piano tuned?" And she replied, "It's not worth while; the hammers need reconditioning in any case." '[2] This dream repeated, without much alteration, a conversation which had taken place between her and her husband the day before the dream. What do we learn from these two reasonable dreams? Nothing except that they contain repetitions from daily life or things connected with it. That would already be something, if it could be said of dreams generally. But there is no question of that; it applies only to a minority, and in most dreams there is no sign of a connection with the day before,[3] and no light is thrown by this on the senseless and absurd dreams. It only shows that we have come upon a new task. We not only want to know what a dream says, but, if it speaks clearly, as it does in these examples of ours, we also want to know why and for what purpose this familiar material, only recently experienced, has been repeated in the dream.

I think that, like me, you must be tired of pursuing enquiries like those we have so far been making. All one's interest in a problem is evidently insufficient unless one knows as well of a path of approach that will lead to its solution. We have not yet found such a path. Experimental psychology has brought us nothing but some very valuable information on the significance of stimuli as instigators to dreaming. We have nothing to expect

[1] [The principal shopping street in Vienna.]
[2] [*I. of D.*, **4**, 185.]
[3] [A qualification of this statement is to follow shortly (p. 106).]

from philosophy except that it will once again haughtily point out to us the intellectual inferiority of the object of our study. Nor have we any wish to borrow anything from the occult sciences. History and popular opinion tell us that dreams have a sense and a meaning: that they look into the future—which is hard to accept and certainly incapable of proof. So our first effort leaves us completely at a loss.

Unexpectedly, a hint reaches us from a direction in which we have not so far looked. Linguistic usage, which is no chance thing, but the precipitate of old discoveries, though, to be sure, it must not be employed incautiously—our language, then, is acquainted with things that bear the strange name of 'day-dreams'. Day-dreams are phantasies products of the imagination ; they are very general phenomena, observable, once more, in healthy as well as in sick people, and are easily accessible to study in our own mind. The most remarkable thing about these imaginative structures is that they have been given the name of 'day-dreams', for there is no trace in them of the two things that are common to dreams [p. 88 ff.]. Their relation to sleep is already contradicted by their name; and, as regards the second thing common to dreams, we do not experience or hallucinate anything in them but imagine something, we know that we are having a phantasy, we do not see but think. These day-dreams appear in the prepubertal period, often in the later part of childhood even; they persist until maturity is reached and are then either given up or maintained till the end of life. The content of these phantasies is dominated by a very transparent motive. They are scenes and events in which the subject's egoistic needs of ambition and power or his erotic wishes find satisfaction. In young men the ambitious phantasies are the most prominent, in women, whose ambition is directed to success in love, the erotic ones. But in men, too, erotic needs are often enough present in the background all their heroic deeds and successes seem only to aim at courting the admiration and favour of women. In other respects these day-dreams are of many different kinds and pass through changing vicissitudes. They are either, each one of them, dropped after a short time and replaced by a fresh one, or they are retained, spun out into long stories and adapted to the changes in the circumstances of the subject's life. They go along

with the times, so to speak, and receive a 'date stamp' which bears witness to the influence of the new situation. They are the raw material of poetic production, for the creative writer uses his day-dreams, with certain remodellings, disguises and omissions, to construct the situations which he introduces into his short stories, his novels or his plays. The hero of the day-dreams is always the subject himself, either directly or by an obvious identification with someone else.[1]

It may be that day-dreams bear their name on account of having the same relation to reality in order to indicate that their content is to be looked on as no less unreal than that of dreams. But perhaps they share this name because of some psychical characteristic of dreams which is still unknown to us, one which we are in search of. It is also possible that we are being quite wrong in trying to make use of this similarity of name as something significant. Only later will it be possible to clear this up.

[1] [Freud's chief discussion of phantasies and of their relation to artistic creation will be found in two of his earlier papers, 'Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming' (1908*e*) and 'Hysterical Phantasies and their Relation to Bisexuality' (1908*a*). He returns to the subject below, in the later part of Lecture XXIII.]

LECTURE VI

THE PREMISSES AND TECHNIQUE OF INTERPRETATION

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, What we need, then, is a new path, a method which will enable us to make a start in the investigation of dreams. I will put a suggestion to you which presents itself. Let us take it as a premiss from this point onwards that *dreams are not somatic but psychical phenomena*. You know what that means, but what justifies our making the assumption? Nothing: but there is nothing either to prevent our making it. Here is the position: if dreams are somatic phenomena they are no concern of ours, they can only interest us on the assumption that they are mental phenomena. We will therefore work on the assumption that they really are, to see what comes of it. The outcome of our work will decide whether we are to hold to this assumption and whether we may then go on to treat it in turn as a proved finding. But what is it actually that we want to arrive at? What is our work aiming at? We want something that is sought for in all scientific work — to understand the phenomena, to establish a correlation between them and, in the latter end, if it is possible, to enlarge our power over them.

We proceed with our work, accordingly, on the supposition that dreams are psychical phenomena. In that case they are products and utterances of the dreamer's, but utterances which tell us nothing, which we do not understand. Well, what do you do if I make an unintelligible utterance to you? You question me, is that not so? Why should we not do the same thing to the dreamer — *question him as to what his dream means*?

As you will remember, we found ourselves in this situation once before. It was while we were investigating certain parapraxes—a case of a slip of the tongue. Someone had said [p. 42]: 'Then facts came to *Vorschein*' and we thereupon asked him — no, it was luckily not we but some other people who had no connection at all with psycho-analysis — these other people, then, asked him what he meant by this unintelligible remark. And he replied at once that he had intended to say

'these facts were *Schweinereien* [disgusting]', but had forced this intention back in favour of the milder version 'then facts came to *Vorschein* [light]'. I pointed out to you at the time [p. 48] that this piece of information was the model for every psycho-analytic investigation, and you will understand now that psycho-analysis follows the technique of getting the people under examination so far as possible themselves to produce the solution of their riddles [p. 49]. Thus, too, it is the dreamer himself who should tell us what his dream means.

But, as we know, things are not so simple with dreams. With parapraxes it worked all right in a number of cases; but then others came along in which the person who was questioned would say nothing, and even indignantly rejected the answer we proposed to him. With dreams cases of the first sort are entirely lacking; the dreamer always says he knows nothing. He cannot reject our interpretation as we have none to offer him. Are we to give up our attempt then? Since he knows nothing and we know nothing and a third person could know even less, there seems to be no prospect of finding out. If you feel inclined, then, give up the attempt! But if you feel otherwise, you can accompany me further. For I can assure you that it is quite possible, and highly probable indeed, that the dreamer *does* know what his dream means: *only he does not know that he knows it and for that reason thinks he does not know it.*

You will point out to me that I am once more introducing an assumption, the second already in this short argument, and that in doing so I am enormously reducing my procedure's claim to credibility: 'Subject to the premiss that dreams are psychical phenomena, and subject to the further premiss that there are mental things in a man which he knows without knowing that he knows them . . .' and so on. If so, one has only to consider the internal improbability of each of these two premisses, and one can quietly divert one's interest from any conclusions that may be based on them.

I have not brought you here, Ladies and Gentlemen, to delude you or to conceal things from you. In my prospectus, it is true, I announced a course of 'Elementary Lectures to Serve as

an Introduction to Psycho-Analysis',[1] but what I had in mind was nothing in the nature of a presentation *in usum Delphini*,[2] which would give you a smooth account with all the difficulties carefully concealed, with the gaps filled in and the doubts glossed over, so that you might believe with an easy mind that you had learnt something new. No, for the very reason of your being beginners, I wanted to show you our science as it is, with its unevennesses and roughnesses, its demands and hesitations. For I know that it is the same in all sciences and cannot possibly be otherwise, especially in their beginnings. I know also that ordinarily instruction is at pains to start out by concealing such difficulties and incompletenesses from the learner. But that will not do for psycho-analysis. So I have in fact laid down two premisses, one within the other; and if anyone finds the whole thing too laborious and too insecure, or if anyone is accustomed to higher certainties and more elegant deductions, he need go no further with us. I think, however, that he should leave psychological problems entirely alone, for it is to be feared that in this quarter he will find impassable the precise and secure paths which he is prepared to follow. And, for a science which has something to offer, there is no necessity to sue for a hearing and for followers. Its findings are bound to canvass on its behalf and it can wait until these have compelled attention to it.

But for those who would like to persist in the subject, I can point out that my two assumptions are not on a par. The first, that dreams are psychical phenomena, is the premiss which we seek to prove by the outcome of our work; the second one has already been proved in another field, and I am merely venturing to bring it over from there to our own problems.

Where, then, in what field, can it be that proof has been found that there is knowledge of which the person concerned nevertheless knows nothing, as we are proposing to assume of dreamers? After all, this would be a strange, surprising fact and one which would alter our view of mental life and which would have no need to hide itself, a fact, incidentally, which cancels itself in its very naming and which nevertheless claims to be

[1] [The 'elementary' was dropped from the title of the lectures in their published form. See footnote 2, p. 9.]

[2] ['For the use of the Dauphin' – an edition of the Classics prepared for his son by order of Louis XIV – 'bowdlerized'.]

something real – a contradiction in terms. Well, it does not hide itself. It is not its fault if people know nothing about it or do not pay enough attention to it. Any more than we are to blame because judgement is passed on all these psychological problems by people who have kept at a distance from all the observations and experiences which are decisive on the matter.

The proof was found in the field of hypnotic phenomena. When, in 1889, I took part in the extraordinarily impressive demonstrations by Liébeault and Bernheim at Nancy,[1] I witnessed the following experiment among others. If a man was put into a state of somnambulism, was made to experience all kinds of things in a hallucinatory manner, and was then woken up, he appeared at first to know nothing of what had happened during his hypnotic sleep. Bernheim then asked him straight out to report what had happened to him under hypnosis. The man maintained that he could remember nothing. But Bernheim held out against this, brought urgent pressure to bear on him, insisted that he knew it and must remember it. And, lo and behold! the man grew uncertain, began to reflect, and recalled in a shadowy way one of the experiences that had been suggested to him, and then another piece, and the memory became clearer and clearer and more and more complete, and finally came to light without a break. Since, however, he knew afterwards what had happened and had learnt nothing about it from anyone else in the interval, we are justified in concluding that he had known it earlier as well. It was merely inaccessible to him, he did not know that he knew it and thought he did not know it. That is to say, the position was exactly the same as what we suspected in our dreamer.

I hope you will be surprised that this fact has been established and will ask me: 'Why did you omit to bring this proof forward earlier, in connection with the parapraxes, when we came to the point of attributing to a man who had made a slip of the tongue an intention to say things of which he knew nothing and which he denied? If a person thinks he knows nothing of experiences the memory of which he nevertheless has within him, it is no longer so improbable that he knows nothing of other mental processes within him. This argument would certainly have impressed us, and helped us to understand parapraxes.' Of course

[1] [Freud returns to this on p. 277.]

I could have brought it forward then, but I reserved it for another place, where it was more needed. The parapraxes explained themselves in part, and in part left us with a suggestion that, in order to preserve the continuity of the phenomena concerned, it would be wise to assume the existence of mental processes of which the subject knows nothing. In the case of dreams we are compelled to bring in explanations from elsewhere and moreover I expect that in their case you will find it easier to accept my carrying over of the explanations from hypnosis. The state in which a parapraxis occurs is bound to strike you as being the normal one; it has no similarity with the hypnotic state. On the other hand there is an obvious kinship between the hypnotic state and the state of sleep, which is a necessary condition of dreaming. Hypnosis, indeed, is described as an artificial sleep. We tell the person we are hypnotizing to sleep, and the suggestions we make are comparable to the dreams of natural sleep. The psychical situations in the two cases are really analogous. In natural sleep we withdraw our interest from the whole external world; and in hypnotic sleep we also withdraw it from the whole world, but with the single exception of the person who has hypnotized us and with whom we remain in rapport. Incidentally, the sleep of a nursing mother, who remains in rapport with her child and can be woken only by him, is a normal counterpart of hypnotic sleep. So it scarcely seems a very bold venture to transpose a situation from hypnosis to natural sleep. The assumption that in a dreamer too a knowledge about his dreams is present, though it is inaccessible to him so that he himself does not believe it, is not something entirely out of the blue. It should be noticed, moreover, that a third line of approach to the study of dreams is opened at this point: from the stimuli which disturb sleep, from day-dreams, and now in addition from the suggested dreams of the hypnotic state.

We may now go back to our task with increased confidence perhaps. It is very probable, then, that the dreamer knows about his dream; the only question is how to make it possible for him to discover his knowledge and communicate it to us. We do not require him to tell us straight away the sense of his dream, but he will be able to find its origin, the circle of

thoughts and interests from which it sprang. You will recall that in the case of the parapraxis the man was asked how he had arrived at the wrong word '*Vorschaun*' and the first thing that occurred to him[1] gave us the explanation. Our technique with dreams, then, is a very simple one, copied from this example. We shall once more ask the dreamer how he arrived at the dream, and once more his first remark is to be looked on as an explanation. Thus we disregard the distinction between his thinking or not thinking that he knows something, and we treat both cases as one and the same.

This technique is certainly very simple, but I fear it will rouse your liveliest opposition. You will say: 'A fresh assumption! the third! And the most unlikely of all! If I ask the dreamer what occurs to him in connection with the dream is precisely the first thing that occurs to him going to bring the explanation we are hoping for? But nothing at all may occur to him, or heaven knows what may occur to him. I cannot see what an expectation of that kind is based on. That is really showing too much trust in Providence at a point where rather more exercise of the critical faculty would be appropriate. Besides, a dream is not a single wrong word; it consists of a number of elements. So which association are we to take up?'

You are correct on all your minor points. A dream differs from a slip of the tongue, among other things, in the multiplicity of its elements. Our technique must take this into account. I therefore suggest to you that we should divide the dream into its elements and start a separate enquiry into each element, if we do this, the analogy with a slip of the tongue is re-established. You are also right in thinking that when the dreamer is questioned about the separate elements of the dream he may reply that nothing occurs to him. There are some instances in which we let this reply pass, and you will later hear which these are [cf. p. 149]; strangely enough, they are instances in which definite ideas may occur to us ourselves. But in general if the dreamer asserts that nothing occurs to him we contradict him; we bring urgent pressure to bear on him, we insist that something must occur to him — and we turn out to be right. He will produce an idea — some idea, it is a matter of indifference to us which. He will give us certain pieces of information,

[1] [See footnote, p. 47 f.]

which may be described as 'historical', with particular ease. He may say: 'That's something that happened yesterday' (as was the case in our two 'matter-of-fact' dreams [p. 97] , or: 'That reminds me of something that happened a short time ago' and we shall discover in this way that dreams are connected with impressions of the last day or two much more often than we thought to begin with [loc. cit.]. And finally he will also recall, starting from the dream, events from further back and even perhaps from the far distant past.

But on your main point you are wrong. If you think it is arbitrary to assume that the first thing that occurs to the dreamer is bound to bring what we are looking for or to lead us to it, if you think that what occurs to him might be anything in the world and might have no connection with what we are looking for, and that it is only exhibiting my trust in Providence if I expect something different—then you are making a great mistake. Once before [p. 49] I ventured to tell you that you nourish a deeply rooted faith in undetermined psychical events and in free will, but that this is quite unscientific and must yield to the demand of a determinism whose rule extends over mental life. I beg you to respect it as a fact that *that* is what occurred to the man when he was questioned and nothing else. But I am not opposing one faith with another. It can be proved that the idea produced by the man was not arbitrary nor indeterminable nor unconnected with what we were looking for. Indeed, not long ago I learnt—without, I may say, attaching too much importance to the fact—that experimental psychology too had brought up evidence to that effect.[1]

In view of the importance of the matter, I will ask for your special attention. If I ask someone to tell me what occurs to him in response to a particular element of a dream, I am asking him to surrender himself to free association *while keeping an idea in mind as a starting-point*. This calls for a special attitude of the attention which is quite different from reflection and which excludes reflection. Some people achieve this attitude with ease; others show an incredibly high degree of clumsiness when they attempt it. There is, however, a higher degree of freedom of

[1] [A footnote dealing with this was added by Freud in 1919 to *I. of D.*, 4, 181 2.]

association' that is to say, I may drop the insistence on keeping an initial idea in mind and only lay down the sort or kind of association I want. I may, for instance, require the experimenter to allow a proper name or a number to occur to him freely. What then occurs to him would presumably be even more arbitrary and more indeterminable than with our own technique. It can be shown, however, that it is always strictly determined by important internal attitudes of mind which are not known to us at the moment at which they operate—which are as little known to us as the disturbing purposes of parapraxes and the provoking ones of chance actions [p. 61].

I and many others after me have repeatedly made such experiments with names and numbers thought of at random, and a few of these have been published.[1] Here the procedure is to produce a series of associations to the name which has emerged; these latter associations are accordingly no longer completely free but have a link, like the associations to the elements of dreams. One continues doing this until one finds the impulse exhausted. But by then light will have been thrown both on the motive and the meaning of the random choice of the name. These experiments always lead to the same result; reports on them often cover a wealth of material and call for extensive expositions. The associations to *numbers* chosen at random are perhaps the most convincing; they run off so quickly and proceed with such incredible certainty to a hidden goal that the effect is really staggering. I will give you only one example of an analysis like this of a name, since dealing with it calls for a conveniently small amount of material.

In the course of treating a young man I had occasion to discuss this topic, and mentioned the thesis that, in spite of an apparently arbitrary choice, it is impossible to think of a name at random which does not turn out to be closely determined by the immediate circumstances, the characteristics of the subject of the experiment and his situation at the moment. Since he was sceptical, I suggested that he should make an experiment of the kind himself on the spot. I knew that he carried on particularly numerous relationships of every kind with married women and

[1] [Several examples are given in Section A of Chapter XII of *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901*b*), *Standard Ed.*, 6, 240 ff., where the whole topic is discussed at length.]

girls, so I thought he would have a specially large choice open to him if it were to be a woman's name that he was asked to choose. He agreed to this. To my astonishment, or rather, perhaps, to his, no avalanche of women's names broke over me; he remained silent for a moment and then admitted that only a single name had come into his head and none other besides: 'Albine'. How curious! But what does that name mean to you? How many 'Albines' do you know? Strange to say, he knew no one called 'Albine' and nothing further occurred to him in response to the name. So it might be thought that the analysis had failed. But not at all: it was already complete, and no further associations were needed. The man had an unusually fair complexion and in conversation during the treatment I had often jokingly called him an albino. We were engaged at the time in determining the feminine part of his constitution. So it was he himself who was this 'Albine', the woman who was the most interesting to him at the moment.

In the same way tunes that come into one's head without warning turn out to be determined by and to belong to a train of thought which has a right to occupy one's mind though without one's being aware of its activity. It is easy to show then that the relation to the tune is based on its text or its origin. But I must be careful not to extend this assertion to really musical people, of whom, as it happens, I have had no experience. It may be that for such people the musical content of the tune is what decides its emergence. The rather case is certainly the commoner one. I know of a young man, for instance, who was positively persecuted for a time by the tune – incidentally a charming one – of Paris's song in [Offenbach's] *La belle Hélène*, till his analysis drew his attention to a contemporary competition in his interest between an 'Ida' and a 'Helen'.[1]

If then things that occur to one quite freely are determined in this way and form parts of a connected whole, we shall no doubt be justified in concluding that things that occur to one with a single link—namely their link with the idea which serves as their starting-point—cannot be any less determined. Investigation shows, in fact, that, apart from the link we have given

[1] [Paris, who eloped with Helen, was at one time a shepherd on Mount Ida, where he delivered his judgement between three competing goddesses.]

them with the initial idea, they are found to be dependent as well on groups of strongly emotional thoughts and interests, 'complexes', whose participation is not known at the moment —that is to say, is unconscious.

The occurrence of ideas with links of this kind has been the subject of very instructive experimental researches, which have played a notable part in the history of psycho-analysis. The school of Wundt had introduced what are known as association-experiments, in which a *stimulus word* is called out to the subject and he has the task of replying to it as quickly as possible with any *reaction* that occurs to him. It is then possible to study the interval that passes between the stimulus and the reaction, the nature of the answer given as a reaction, possible errors when the same experiment is repeated later, and so on. The Zurich school, led by Bleuler and Jung, found the explanation of the reactions that followed in the association-experiment by getting the subjects to throw light on their reactions by means of subsequent associations, if those reactions had shown striking features. It then turned out that these striking reactions were determined in the most definite fashion by the subject's complexes. In this manner Bleuler and Jung built the first bridge from experimental psychology to psycho-analysis.

Having learnt thus much, you will be able to say: 'We acknowledge now that thoughts that occur to one freely are determined and not arbitrary as we supposed. We admit that this is also true of thoughts occurring in response to the elements of dreams. But that is not what we are concerned with. You assert that what occurs to the dreamer in response to the dream-element will be determined by the psychical background (unknown to us) of that particular element. This does not seem to us to be proved. We quite expect that what occurs to the dreamer in response to the dream-element will turn out to be determined by one of the dreamer's complexes, but what good does that do us? This does not lead us to an understanding of dreams but, like the association-experiment, to a knowledge of these so-called complexes. But what have they got to do with dreams?'

You are right, but you are overlooking one factor. Moreover it is precisely the factor on account of which I did not choose

gotten name, and I find when this happens that both the spontaneous substitute name and the ones that I have called up are connected with the forgotten one and were determined by it.

I will describe an analysis of this kind to you. I noticed one day that I could not recall the name of the small country on the Riviera, of which Monte Carlo is the chief town. It was very tiresome, but so it was. I summoned up all that I knew about that country. I thought of Prince Albert of the House of Lusignan, of his marriages, of his devotion to deep-sea researches, and everything else I could bring together, but it was of no avail. So I gave up reflection and allowed substitute names to occur to me instead of the lost one. They came rapidly: Monte Carlo itself, then Piedmont, Albania, Montevideo, Colico. Of this series I was struck first by Albania, which was at once replaced by Montenegro, no doubt because of the contrast between white and black.[1] I then saw that four of these substitute names contained the same syllable 'mon', then suddenly I had the forgotten word and exclaimed aloud: 'Monaco!' So the substitute names had in fact arisen from the forgotten one: the first four came from its first syllable while the last reproduced its syllabic structure and its whole last syllable. Moreover I was able to discover quite easily what it was that had temporarily deprived me of the name. Monaco is also the Italian name for Munich, and it was that town which exerted the inhibitory influence.[2]

No doubt this example is a good one, but it is too simple. In other cases it would have been necessary to call up a longer string of ideas in response to the first substitute name. I have had experiences of that sort too. On one occasion a stranger had invited me to drink some Italian wine with him, but when we were in the inn it turned out that he had forgotten the name of the wine which he intended to order because of his very agreeable recollections of it. From a quantity of substitute ideas of different kinds which came into his head in place of the forgotten name, I was able to infer that thoughts about someone called Hedwig had made him forget the name. And he not only confirmed the fact that he had first tasted this wine when he

[1] ['*Albus*' the Latin for 'white', and '*negro*' the Italian for 'black'.]

[2] [This episode is described more briefly in *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, *Standard Ed.*, 6, 55.]

the association-experiment as the starting-point of this exposition. In that experiment the single determinant of the reaction—that is, the stimulus-word—is arbitrarily chosen by us. The reaction is in that case an intermediary between the stimulus-word and the complex which has been aroused in the subject. In dreams the stimulus-word is replaced by something that is itself derived from the dreamer's mental life, from sources unknown to him, and may therefore very easily itself be a 'derivative of a complex'. It is therefore not precisely fantastic to suppose that the further associations linked to the dream-elements will be determined by the same complex as that of the element itself and will lead to its discovery.

Let me show you from another instance that the facts are as we expect. The forgetting of proper names is actually an excellent model of what happens in dream-analysis; the difference is only that events that are shared between two people in dream-analysis are combined in a single person in the parapraxis. If I forget a name temporarily, I nevertheless feel in myself a certainty that I know it—a certainty which in the case of the dreamer we only arrived at by the round-about path of the Bernheim experiment [p. 103]. The name which I have forgotten but which I know is, however, not accessible to me. Experience soon teaches me that thinking about it, with however much effort, is of no help. But in place of the forgotten name I can always call up one or several substitute names. It is only after a substitute name of this kind has occurred to me spontaneously that the conformity of this situation with that of dream-interpretation becomes obvious. Like this substitute name, the dream-element is not the right thing, but only takes the place of something else—of the genuine thing which I do not know and which I am to discover by means of the dream-analysis. The difference is once more only that in the case of forgetting the name, I recognize the substitute unhesitatingly as something ungenuine, whereas we had to acquire this view laboriously in the case of the dream-element. Now in the case of forgetting a name there is also a method by which we can start from the substitute and arrive at the unconscious genuine thing, the forgotten name. If I direct my attention to the substitute names and allow further ideas in response to them to occur to me, I arrive by shorter or longer detours at the for-

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[2] [This episode is described more briefly in *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, *Standard Ed.*, 6, 55.]

was with someone of that name, but with the help of this discovery he recalled the name of the wine. He was happily married at the present time and this Hedwig belonged to earlier days which he had no wish to remember.

But if it is possible in the case of forgetting a name, it must also be possible in interpreting dreams to proceed from the substitute along the chain of associations attached to it and so to obtain access to the genuine thing which is being held back. From the example of the forgotten name we may conclude that the associations to the dream-element will be determined both by the dream-element and also by the unconscious genuine thing behind it. In this way, then, we seem to have produced some justification of our technique.

LECTURE VII

THE MANIFEST CONTENT OF DREAMS AND THE LATENT DREAM-THOUGHTS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—As you see, our study of parapraxes has not been unprofitable. Thanks to our labours over them we have, subject to the premisses I have explained to you,[1] achieved two things: a conception of the nature of dream-elements and a technique for interpreting dreams. The conception of dream elements tells us that they are ungenuine things [p. 110], substitutes for something else that is unknown to the dreamer like the purpose of a parapraxis, substitutes for something the knowledge of which is present in the dreamer but which is inaccessible to him. We are in hopes that it will be possible to carry over the same conception to whole dreams, which are made up of such elements. Our technique lies in employing free association to these elements in order to bring about the emergence of other substitutive structures, which will enable us to arrive at what is concealed from view.

I now propose that we should introduce a change into our nomenclature which will give us more freedom of movement. Instead of speaking of 'concealed', 'inaccessible', or 'ungenuine',[2] let us adopt the correct description and say 'inaccessible to the dreamer's consciousness' or '*unconscious*'.[3] I mean nothing else by this than what may be suggested to you when you think of a word that has escaped you or the disturbing purpose in a parapraxis—that is to say, I mean nothing else than '*unconscious at the moment*'. In contrast to this, we can of course speak of the dream-elements themselves, and the substitutive ideas that have been newly arrived at from them by association, as '*conscious*'. This nomenclature so far involves no

[1] [See pp. 100 and 101.]

[2] ['*Uneigentlich*' in all the German editions. The sense would seem to require '*eigentlich* (genuine)'.]

[3] [Cf. Lecture I, p. 21, the discussion is continued below in Lecture XIII, p. 212.]

theoretical construction. No objection can be made to using the word 'unconscious' as an apt and easily understandable description.

If we carry over our conception of the separate elements to the whole dream, it follows that the dream as a whole is a distorted substitute for something else, something unconscious, and that the task of interpreting a dream is to discover this unconscious material. From this, however, there at once follow three important rules, which we must obey during the work of interpreting dreams.

(1) We must not concern ourselves with what the dream *appears* to tell us, whether it is intelligible or absurd, clear or confused, since it cannot possibly be the unconscious material we are in search of. (An obvious limitation to this rule will force itself on our notice later [p. 126].) (2) We must restrict our work to calling up the substitutive ideas for each element, we must not reflect about them, or consider whether they contain anything relevant, and we must not trouble ourselves with how far they diverge from the dream-element. (3) We must wait till the concealed unconscious material we are in search of emerges of its own accord, exactly as the forgotten word 'Monaco' did in the experiment I have described [p. 111].

Now, too, we can understand to what extent it is a matter of indifference how much or how little the dream is remembered and, above all, how accurately or how uncertainly. For the remembered dream is not the genuine material but a distorted substitute for it, which should assist us, by calling up other substitutive images, to come nearer to the genuine material, to make what is unconscious in the dream conscious. If our memory has been inaccurate, therefore, it has merely made a further distortion of this substitute—a distortion, moreover, which cannot have been without a reason.

The work of interpreting can be performed on one's own dreams just as on other people's. In fact one learns more from one's own: the process carries more conviction. If, then, we make the attempt, we notice that something is opposing our work. It is true that ideas occur to us, but we do not allow all of them to count; testing and selecting influences make themselves felt. In the case of one idea we may say to ourselves: 'No, this is not revelent, it does not belong here'; in the case of

another: 'this is too senseless' and of a third: 'this is totally unimportant'. And we can further observe how with objections of this sort we may smother ideas and finally expel them altogether, even before they have become quite clear. Thus on the one hand we keep too close to the idea which was our starting-point, the dream-element itself, and on the other hand we interfere with the outcome of the free associations by making a selection. If we are not by ourselves while interpreting the dream, if we get someone else to interpret it, we become very clearly aware of yet another motive which we employ in making this illicit selection, for sometimes we say to ourselves: 'No, this idea is too disagreeable; I will not or cannot report it.'

These objections are obviously a threat to the success of our work. We must guard against them, and in our own case we do so by firmly resolving not to give way to them. If we are analysing someone else's dream, we do so by laying it down as an inviolable rule that he must not hold back any idea from us, even if it gives rise to one of the four objections—of being too unimportant or too senseless or of being irrelevant or too distressing to be reported.[1] The dreamer promises to obey the rule, and we may be annoyed afterwards to find how badly he keeps his promise when the occasion arises. We may explain this to ourselves to begin with by supposing that, in spite of our authoritative assurance, he has not yet realized the justification for free association, and we may perhaps have the notion of first convincing him theoretically by giving him books to read or by sending him to lectures which may convert him into a supporter of our views on free association. But we shall be held back from blunders like this when we consider that in the case of ourselves, as to the strength of whose convictions we can, after all, hardly be in doubt, the same objections arise to certain ideas and are only set aside subsequently by a court of appeal, as it were.

Instead of being annoyed by the dreamer's disobedience, we may take advantage of these experiences by learning something new from them—something which is all the more important the

[1] [Freud returns to this 'fundamental technical rule of analysis' in Lecture XIX, p. 267 below, where an Editor's footnote gives further references.]

less we are expecting it. We perceive that the work of interpreting dreams is carried out in the face of a *resistance*, which opposes it and of which the critical objections are manifestations.[1] This resistance is independent of the dreamer's theoretical conviction. We learn still more, indeed. We discover that a critical objection of this kind never turns out to be justified. On the contrary, the ideas which people try to suppress in this way turn out *invariably* to be the most important ones and those which are decisive in our search for the unconscious material. It amounts, in fact, to a special distinguishing mark, if an idea is accompanied by an objection like this.

This resistance is something entirely new: a phenomenon which we have come upon in connection with our premisses [p. 101 f.], but one which was not included among them. The appearance of this new factor in our reckoning comes to us as a not altogether pleasant surprise. We suspect at once that it is not going to make our work any easier. It might mislead us into abandoning our whole concern with dreams—something so unimportant as a dream and, on top of that, all these difficulties instead of a simple straightforward technique! But, on the other hand, the difficulties might act precisely as a stimulus and make us suspect that the work will be worth the trouble. We regularly come up against resistance when we try to make our way forward from the substitute which is the dream-element to the unconscious material hidden behind it. So we may conclude that there must be something of importance concealed behind the substitute. Otherwise, what is the point of the difficulties that are trying to keep the concealment going? If a child refuses to open his clenched fist to show what he has in it, we may feel sure that it is something wrong—something he ought not to have.

The moment we introduce the dynamic idea of a resistance into the facts of the case, we must simultaneously reflect that this factor is something variable in quantity. There may be greater and smaller resistances, and we are prepared to find these differences showing themselves during our work as well. We may perhaps be able to link with this another experience we also meet with during the work of interpreting dreams: sometimes it requires only a single response, or no more than a

[1] [The subject of 'resistance' is fully dealt with in Lecture XIX.]

few, to lead us from a dream-element to the unconscious material behind it, while on other occasions long chains of associations and the overcoming of many critical objections are required for bringing this about. We shall conclude that these differences relate to the changing magnitude of the resistance, and we shall probably turn out to be right.[1] If the resistance is small, the substitute cannot be far distant from the unconscious material; but a greater resistance means that the unconscious material will be greatly distorted and that the path will be a long one from the substitute back to the unconscious material.

And now perhaps it is time to take a dream and try our technique upon it and see whether our expectations are confirmed. Yes, but what dream are we to choose for the purpose? You cannot imagine how hard I find it to decide; nor can I yet make the nature of my difficulties plain to you. There must obviously be dreams which have on the whole been subjected to only a little distortion, and the best plan would be to begin with them. But what dreams have been least distorted? The ones that are intelligible and not confused, two examples of which I have already put before you [p. 97]? That would be leading us quite astray. Investigation shows that such dreams have been subjected to an extraordinarily high degree of distortion. If, however, I were to disregard particular requirements and were to select a dream at haphazard, you would probably be greatly disappointed. We might have to notice or record such a profusion of ideas in response to the separate dream-elements that we should be unable to make head or tail of the work. If we write down a dream and then make a note of all the ideas that emerge in response to it, these may prove to be many times longer than the text of the dream. The best plan would therefore seem to be to choose out a number of short dreams for analysis, each of which will at least tell us something or confirm some point. So we will make up our minds to take that course, unless experience may perhaps show us where we can really find dreams that have been only slightly distorted.[2]

[1] [Freud discussed the effects on dream-interpretation of a high or low pressure of resistance in Section II of his 'Remarks on the Theory and Practice of Dream-Interpretation' (1923c), *Standard Ed.*, **19**, 110.]

[2] [See the following lecture.]

I can however think of something else that will make things easier for us—something, moreover, which lies along our path. Instead of starting on the interpretation of *whole* dreams, we will restrict ourselves to a few dream-elements, and we will trace out in a number of examples how these can be explained by applying our technique to them.

(*a*) A lady reported that she very often dreamt when she was a child that *God wore a paper cocked-hat on his head.* What can you make of that without the dreamer's help? It sounds completely nonsensical. But it ceases to be nonsense when we hear from the lady that she used to have a hat of that sort put on her head at meals when she was a child, because she could never resist taking furtive glances at her brothers' and sisters' plates to see whether they had been given larger helpings than she had. So the hat was intended to act like a pair of blinkers. This, incidentally, was a piece of historical information [p. 105 f.] and was given without any difficulty. The interpretation of this element and at the same time of the whole short dream was easily made with the help of a further idea that occurred to the dreamer: 'As I had heard that God was omniscient and saw everything', she said, 'the dream can only mean that I knew everything and saw everything, even though they tried to prevent me.'[1] Perhaps this example is too simple.

(*b*) A sceptical woman patient had a longish dream in the course of which some people told her about my book on jokes [1905*c*] and praised it highly. Something came in then about *a 'channel', perhaps it was another book that mentioned a channel, or something else about a channel . . . she didn't know . . . it was all so indistinct.*

No doubt you will be inclined to expect that the element 'channel', since it was so indistinct, would be inaccessible to interpretation. You are right in suspecting a difficulty; but the difficulty did not arise from the indistinctness: both the difficulty and the indistinctness arose from another cause. Nothing occurred to the dreamer in connection with 'channel', and *I* could of course throw no light on it. A little later—it was the next day, in point of fact—she told me that she had thought of

[1] [This dream is reported in *I of D*., 5, 413–14.]

something that *might* have something to do with it. It was a joke, too,—a joke she had heard. On the steamer between Dover and Calais a well-known author fell into conversation with an Englishman. The latter had occasion to quote the phrase: 'Du sublime au ridicule il n'y a qu'un pas. [It is only a step from the sublime to the ridiculous.]' 'Yes,' replied the author, '*le Pas de Calais*'—meaning that he thought France sublime and England ridiculous. But the *Pas de Calais* is a channel—the English Channel. You will ask whether I think this had anything to do with the dream. Certainly I think so; and it provides the solution of the puzzling element of the dream. Can you doubt that this joke was already present before the dream occurred, as the unconscious thought behind the element 'channel'? Can you suppose that it was introduced as a subsequent invention? The association betrayed the scepticism which lay concealed behind the patient's ostensible admiration; and her resistance against revealing this was no doubt the common cause both of her delay in producing the association and of the indistinctness of the dream-element concerned. Consider the relation of the dream-element to its unconscious background: it was, as it were, a fragment of the background, an allusion to it, but it was made quite incomprehensible by being isolated.[1]

(*c*) As part of a longish dream a patient dreamt that *several members of his family were sitting round a table of a peculiar shape*, etc. It occurred to him in connection with the table that he had seen a piece of furniture of the kind when he was on a visit to a particular family. His thoughts then went on to say that there was a peculiar relationship between the father and son in this family; and he soon added that the same thing was true of the relationship between himself and his own father. So the table had been taken into the dream in order to point out this parallel.

This dreamer had been long familiar with the requirement of dream-interpretation. Another person might perhaps have taken objection to such a trivial detail as the shape of a table being made the subject of investigation. But in fact we regard nothing in a dream as accidental or indifferent, and we expect

[1] [The whole of this example (*b*) was inserted by Freud into *I. of D.* as a footnote in 1919 (5, 517-18).]

to obtain information precisely from the explanation of such trivial and pointless details. You may perhaps also feel surprised that the thought that 'the same thing was true of us and of them' should have been expressed by, in particular, the choice of a table [*Tisch*]. But this too becomes clear when you learn that the name of the family in question was *Tischler* [literally, 'carpenter']. By making his relations sit at this *Tisch*, he was saying that they too were *Tischlers*. Incidentally, you will notice how inevitably one is led into being indiscreet when one reports these dream-interpretations. And you will guess that this is one of the difficulties I have hinted at over the choice of examples. I could easily have taken another example in place of this one, but I should probably merely have avoided *this* indiscretion at the price of committing another.

The moment seems to me to have arrived for introducing two terms, which we could have made use of long ago. We will describe what the dream actually tells us as the *manifest dream-content*, and the concealed material, which we hope to reach by pursuing the ideas that occur to the dreamer, as the *latent dream-thoughts*. Thus we are here considering the relations between the manifest content of the dream and the latent dream-thoughts as shown in these examples. These relations may be of very many different kinds. In examples (*a*) and (*b*) the manifest element is also a constituent of the latent thoughts, though only a small fragment of them. A small piece of the large and complicated psychical structure of unconscious dream-thoughts has made its way into the manifest dream as well – a fragment of them, or, in other cases, an allusion to them, a caption, as it were, or an abbreviation in telegraphic style. It is the business of the work of interpretation to complete these fragments or this allusion into a whole – which was achieved particularly nicely in the case of example (*b*). Thus one form of the distortion which constitutes the dream-work is replacement by a fragment or an allusion. In example (*c*) another kind of relation is to be observed in addition; and we shall find this expressed in a purer and clearer form in the examples which follow.

(*d*) The dreamer *was pulling a lady* (a particular one, of his acquaintance) *out from behind a bed*. He himself found the mean-

ing of this dream-element from the first idea that occurred to him. It meant that he was giving this lady preference.[1]

(*e*) Another man dreamt that *his brother was in a box* [*Kasten*]. In his first response '*Kasten*' was replaced by '*Schrank* [cupboard]', and the second gave the interpretation: his brother was restricting himself ['*schränkt sich ein*'].[2]

(*f*) The dreamer *climbed to the top of a mountain, which commanded an unusually extensive view*. This sounds quite rational and you might suppose that there is nothing to interpret in it and that all we have to do is to enquire what memory gave rise to the dream and the reason for its being stirred up. But you would be wrong. It turned out that this dream stood in need of interpreting just as much as any other, more confused one. For none of his own mountain climbs occurred to the dreamer, but he thought of the fact that an acquaintance of his was the editor of a 'Survey', dealing with our relations with the most remote parts of the earth. Thus the latent dream-thought was an identification of the dreamer with the 'surveyor'.

Here we have a new type of relation between the manifest and latent dream-elements. The former is not so much a distortion of the latter as a representation of it, a plastic, concrete, portrayal of it, taking its start from the wording. But precisely on that account it is once more a distortion, for we have long since forgotten from what concrete image the word originated and consequently fail to recognize it when it is replaced by the image. When you consider that the manifest dream is made up predominantly of visual images and more rarely of thoughts and words, you can imagine what importance attaches to this kind of relation in the construction of dreams. You will see, too, that in this way it becomes possible in regard to a large number of abstract thoughts to create pictures to act as substitutes for them in the manifest dream while at the same time serving the purpose of concealment. This is the technique of the familiar

[1] [This example, like the next, depends on a purely verbal point: the resemblance between the German words for 'pulling out' *hervorziehen* and 'preferring' *vorziehen*. From *I. of D.*, 5, 409.]

[2] [This and the next example are from *I. of D.*, 5, 407.]

picture-puzzles. Why it is that these representations have an appearance of being jokes is a special problem into which we need not enter here.[1]

There is a fourth kind of relation between the manifest and latent elements, which I must continue to hold back from you until we come upon its key-word in considering technique.[2] Even so I shall not have given you a full list; but it will serve our purpose.

Do you feel bold enough now to venture upon the interpretation of a *whole* dream? Let us make the experiment, to see whether we are well enough equipped for the task. I shall of course not select one of the most obscure ones, nevertheless, it will be one that gives a well-marked picture of the attributes of a dream.[3]

Very well then. A lady who, though she was still young, had been married for many years had the following dream: *She was at the theatre with her husband. One side of the stalls was completely empty. Her husband told her that Elise L. and her fiancé had wanted to go too, but had only been able to get bad seats three for 1 florin 50 kreuzers*[4] *and of course they could not take those. She thought it would not really have done any harm if they had.*

The first thing the dreamer reported to us was that the precipitating cause of the dream was touched on in its manifest content. Her husband had in fact told her that Elise L., who was approximately her contemporary, had just become engaged. The dream was a reaction to this information. We know already [p. 106] that it is easy in the case of many dreams to point to a precipitating cause like this from the previous day, and that the dreamer is often able to trace this for us without any difficulty. The dreamer in the present case put similar in-

[1] [See the discussion of the point in Chapter VI of Freud's book on jokes (1905*c*), *Standard Ed.*, **8**, 173, cf. also p. 235 f. below.]

[2] [See below, p. 151.]

[3] [The dream which follows had been analysed, but very much less elaborately, in *I. of D.*, **5**, 415–16. It is also discussed in Chapters VII and VIII of the short work *On Dreams* (1901*a*), ibid., **5**, 669–70 and 673. Freud returns to it in these lectures at several points, pp. 139–40, 178, 219–21 and 224–5 below.]

[4] [This had at the time been worth approximately 2*s.* 6*d.* or 62½ cents.]

formation at our disposal for other elements of the manifest dream as well.—Where did the detail come from about one side of the stalls being empty? It was an allusion to a real event of the previous week. She had planned to go to a particular play and had therefore bought her tickets *early*—so early that she had had to pay a booking fee. When they got to the theatre it turned out that her anxiety was quite uncalled-for, since *one side of the stalls was almost empty*. It would have been early enough if she had bought the tickets on the actual day of the performance. Her husband had kept on teasing her for having been in too much of a hurry.—What was the origin of the 1 florin 50 kreuzers? It arose in quite another connection, which had nothing to do with the former one but also alluded to some information from the previous day. Her sister-in-law had been given a present of 150 florins by her husband and had been in a great hurry—the silly goose—to rush off to the jewellers' and exchange the money for a piece of jewellery.—Where did the 'three' come from? She could think of nothing in connection with that, unless we counted the idea that her newly-engaged friend, Elise L., was only three months her junior, though she herself had been a married woman for nearly ten years. And the absurd notion of taking three tickets for only two people? She had nothing to say to that, and refused to report any further ideas or information.

But all the same, she had given us so much material in these few associations that it was possible to guess the latent dream-thoughts from them. We cannot help being struck by the fact that periods of time occur at several points in the information she gave us about the dream, and these provide a common factor between the different parts of the material. She took the theatre tickets *too early*, bought them *over-hurriedly* so that she had to pay more than was necessary, so too her sister-in-law had been *in a hurry* to take her money to the jewellers and buy some jewellery with it, as though otherwise she would *miss it*. If, in addition to the 'too early' and 'in a hurry' which we have stressed, we take into account the precipitating cause of the dream—the news that her friend, though only three months *her junior*, had nevertheless got an excellent husband—and the criticism of her sister-in-law expressed in the idea that it was *absurd* of her to be in such a hurry, then we find ourselves

presented almost spontaneously with the following construction of the latent dream-thoughts, for which the manifest dream is a severely distorted substitute:

'Really it was *absurd* of me to be in such a hurry to get married! I can see from Elise's example that *I* could have got a husband later too.' (Being in too great a hurry was represented by her own behaviour in buying the tickets and by her sister-in-law's in buying the jewellery. Going to the play appeared as a substitute for getting married.) This would seem to be the main thought. We may perhaps proceed further, though with less certainty, since the analysis ought not to have been without the dreamer's comments at these points: 'And I could have got one a hundred times better with the money!' (150 florins is a hundred times more than 1 florin 50.) If we were to put her dowry in place of the money, it would mean that her husband was bought with her dowry: the jewellery, and the bad tickets as well, would be substitutes for her husband. It would be still more satisfactory if the actual element 'three tickets' had something to do with a husband. [Cf. below, p. 220.] But we have not got so far as that in our understanding of the dream. We have only discovered that the dream expresses the *low value* assigned by her to her own husband and her regret at having *married so early*.

We shall, I fancy, be more surprised and confused than satisfied by the outcome of this first dream-interpretation. We have been given too much in one dose—more than we are yet able to cope with. We can already see that we shall not exhaust the lessons of this interpretation of a dream. Let us hasten to single out what we can recognize as established new discoveries.

In the first place, it is a remarkable thing that the main emphasis in the latent thoughts lies on the element of being in too great a hurry; nothing of the sort is to be found in the manifest dream. Without the analysis, we should have had no suspicion that that factor plays any part. It seems, therefore, to be possible for what is in fact the main thing, the centre of the unconscious thoughts, to be absent in the manifest dream. This means that the impression made by the whole dream must be fundamentally altered. In the second place, there is an absurd combination in the dream: three for 1 florin 50. We detected in the dream-thoughts the assertion that 'it was absurd (to marry

so early)'. Can it be doubted that this thought, 'it was absurd', is represented by the inclusion of an absurd element in the manifest dream? And in the third place, a glance of comparison shows us that the relation between the manifest and latent elements is no simple one; it is far from being the case that one manifest element always takes the place of one latent one. It is rather that there is a group-relation between the two layers, within which one manifest element can replace several latent ones or one latent element can be replaced by several manifest ones. [Cf. below, p. 173.]

As regards the meaning of the dream and the dreamer's attitude to it, we might point out much that is similarly surprising. She agreed to the interpretation indeed, but she was astonished at it. She was not aware that she assigned such a low value to her husband; nor did she know *why* she should set such a low value on him. So there is still much that is unintelligible about it. It really seems to me that we are not yet equipped for interpreting a dream and that we need first to be given some further instruction and preparation.

LECTURE VIII

CHILDREN'S DREAMS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I am under the impression that we have advanced too quickly. Let us go back a little. Before we made our last attempt at overcoming the difficulty of distortion in dreams by the help of our technique, we were saying [p. 117] that our best plan would be to get round the difficulty by keeping to dreams in which there was no distortion or only a very little. If such dreams exist. This will once more mean a divergence from the historical development of our discoveries [cf. p. 83]; for actually it was only after the technique of interpretation had been consistently applied and distorted dreams had been completely analysed that the existence of dreams that are free from distortion came to our notice.

The dreams we are in search of occur in children.[1] They are short, clear, coherent, easy to understand and unambiguous; but they are nevertheless undoubtedly dreams. You must not suppose, however, that all children's dreams are of this kind. Dream-distortion sets in very early in childhood, and dreams dreamt by children of between five and eight have been reported which bear all the characteristics of later ones. But if you limit yourselves to ages between the beginning of observable mental activity and the fourth or fifth year, you will come upon a number of dreams which possess the characteristics that can be described as 'infantile' and you will find a few of the same kind in later years of childhood. Indeed, under certain conditions even adults have dreams which are quite similar to the typically infantile ones.

From these children's dreams we can draw conclusions with great ease and certainty on the essential nature of dreams in general, and we can hope that those conclusions will prove decisive and universally valid.

(1) No analysis, no application of any technique is necessary

[1] [There is no separate chapter on children's dreams in *I of D*, but they are dealt with in Chapter III, **4**, 127 ff., where the examples in the present lecture will be found again.]

in order to understand these dreams. There is no need to question a child who tells us his dream. One has, however, to add a piece of information to it from the events of the child's life. There is invariably some experience of the previous day which explains the dream to us. The dream is the reaction of the child's mental life in his sleep to this experience of the previous day.

We will take a few examples on which to base our further conclusions.

a) A boy of 22 months was told to hand over a basket of cherries to someone as a birthday present. He was obviously very unwilling to do it, although he was promised that he should have a few of them for himself. Next morning he reported having dreamt: '*Hermann eaten all the cherries!*'

(*b*) A girl of 3¼ years was taken across the lake for the first time. At the landing-stage she did not want to leave the boat and wept bitterly. The crossing had been too short for her. Next morning she announced, '*Last night I went on the lake.*' We may safely add that this crossing had lasted longer.

c) A boy of 5¼ years was taken on an excursion up the Echerntal near Hallstatt.[1] He had been told that Hallstatt was at the foot of the Dachstein. He had shown great interest in this mountain. There was a fine view of it from where he was staying at Aussee, and the Simony Hut on it could be made out through a telescope. The child had often tried to see it through the telescope—with what success was not known. The excursion began in an atmosphere of cheerful expectation. Whenever a fresh mountain came into view the boy asked: 'Is that the Dachstein?' and he became more and more depressed the more often he was told it was not. Finally he fell completely silent and refused to go with the rest of the party up the short ascent to the waterfall, and it was thought that he must be overtired. But next morning he said with a radiant face: 'Last night I dreamt *we were at the Simony Hut.*' So that had been what he expected to do on the excursion. He gave no further details except something he had heard before: 'You have to climb up steps for six hours.'

These three dreams will give us all the information we require.

2. As we can see, these children's dreams are not senseless. They are intelligible, completely valid mental acts. You will

[1] [In the Salzkammergut district of Upper Austria.]

not been dealt with—and it is to this that they react with the dream.

(5) This gives us the most direct approach to understanding the function of dreams. In so far as a dream is a reaction to a psychical stimulus, it must be equivalent to dealing with the stimulus in such a way that it is got rid of and that sleep can continue. We do not yet know how this dealing with the stimulus by the dream is made possible dynamically, but we see already that *dreams are not disturbers of sleep*, as they are abusively called, but *guardians of sleep which get rid of disturbances of sleep*. We think we should have slept more soundly if there had been no dream, but we are wrong; in fact, without the help of the dream we should not have slept at all. It is due to it that we have slept as soundly as we have. It could not avoid disturbing us a little, just as the night-watchman often cannot help making a little noise while he chases away the disturbers of the peace who seek to waken us with their noise.

(6) What instigates a dream is a wish, and the fulfilment of that wish is the content of the dream—this is one of the chief characteristics of dreams. The other, equally constant one, is that a dream does not simply give expression to a thought, but represents the wish fulfilled as a hallucinatory experience.[1] '*I should like to go on the lake*' is the wish that instigates the dream. The content of the dream itself is, '*I am going on the lake.*' Thus even in these simple children's dreams a difference remains between the latent and the manifest dream, there is a distortion of the latent dream-thought—*the transformation of a thought into an experience*. In the process of interpreting a dream this alteration must first be undone. If this turns out to be the most universal characteristic of dreams, the fragment of dream which I reported to you earlier [p. 121] 'I saw my brother in a box [*Kasten*]' is not to be translated 'my brother is restricting himself [*schnärkt sich ein*]' but 'I should like my brother to restrict himself: *my brother must restrict himself.*' Of the two general characteristics of dreams which I have here brought forward, the second clearly has more prospect of being accepted without

[1] [It will be noted that the two 'chief characteristics' or 'general characteristics of dreams' considered in what follows are not the same as the two 'things common to all dreams' discussed in Lecture V, p. 88 ff. above.]

recall what I told you of the medical view of dreams and of the analogy with unmusical fingers wandering over the keys of a piano [p. 87.] You cannot fail to observe how sharply these children's dreams contradict this view. It would really be too strange if *children* could perform complete mental functions in their sleep while *adults* were content under the same conditions with reactions which were no more than 'twitchings'. Moreover, we have every reason to think that children's sleep is sounder and deeper.

(3) These dreams are without any dream-distortion, and therefore call for no interpretative activity. Here the manifest and the latent dream coincide. *Thus dream-distortion is not part of the essential nature of dreams.* I expect this will be a weight off your minds. But when we examine these dreams more closely, we shall recognize a small piece of dream-distortion even in them, a certain distinction between the manifest content of the dream and the latent dream-thoughts.

(4) A child's dream is a reaction to an experience of the previous day, which has left behind it a regret, a longing, a wish that has not been dealt with. *The dream produces a direct, undisguised fulfilment of that wish.* Let us recall now our discussions on the part played by somatic stimuli from outside and from within as disturbers of sleep and instigators of dreams [p. 91 ff.]. In that connection we came to know some quite undoubted facts, but by their means we were only able to explain a small number of dreams. In these children's dreams, however, there is nothing that points to the operation of somatic stimuli of that kind; we could not be mistaken in this, for the dreams are completely intelligible and easy to grasp. But this does not mean that we need abandon the stimulus aetiology of dreams. We can only ask how it has happened that from the first we have forgotten that besides somatic stimuli there are *mental* stimuli that disturb sleep. We know, after all, that it is excitations of this kind that are chiefly responsible for disturbing the sleep of an adult by preventing him from establishing the mood required for falling asleep—the withdrawing of interest from the world. He does not want to interrupt his life but would rather continue his work on the things he is concerned with, and for that reason he does not fall asleep. In the case of children, therefore, the stimulus that disturbs sleep is a mental one—the wish that has

contradiction than the first. It is only by means of far-reaching investigations that we shall be able to establish the fact that what instigates dreams must always be a wish and cannot be a worry or an intention or a reproach; but this will not affect the other characteristic—that the dream does not simply reproduce this stimulus, but removes it, gets rid of it, deals with it, by means of a kind of experience.

(7) On the basis of these characteristics of dreams, we can return once more to a comparison between a dream and a parapraxis. In the latter we distinguished between a disturbing purpose and a disturbed one [p. 61 ff.], and the parapraxis was a compromise between them. A dream can be fitted into the same pattern. The disturbed purpose can only be that of sleeping. We may replace the disturbing one by the psychical stimulus, or let us say by the wish which presses to be dealt with, since we have not learnt so far of any other psychical stimulus that disturbs sleep. Here the dream, too, is the result of a compromise. One sleeps, but one nevertheless experiences the removing of a wish, one satisfies a wish, but at the same time one continues to sleep. Both purposes are partly achieved and partly abandoned.

(8) You will recall that at one point [p. 98] we hoped to approach an understanding of the problems of dreams from the fact that certain imaginative structures which are very transparent to us are known as 'day-dreams'. Now these day-dreams are in fact wish-fulfilments, fulfilments of ambitions and erotic wishes which are well known to us; but they are *thought*, even though vividly imagined, and never experienced as hallucinations. Of the two chief characteristics of dreams, then, the less well assured is preserved here, while the other, since it depends on the state of sleep and cannot be realized in waking life, is entirely absent. Linguistic usage, therefore, has a suspicion of the fact that wish-fulfilment is a chief characteristic of dreams. Incidentally, if our experience in dreams is only a modified kind of imagining made possible by the conditions of the state of sleep that is, a 'nocturnal day-dreaming' we can already understand how the process of constructing a dream can dispose of the nocturnal stimulus and bring satisfaction, since day-dreaming too is an activity bound up with satisfaction and is only practised, indeed, on that account.

But other usages of language express the same sense. There are familiar proverbs such as 'Pigs dream of acorns and geese dream of maize' or 'What do hens dream of? Of millet.'[1] So proverbs go even lower than we do below children to animals —and assert that the content of dreams is the satisfaction of a need. Numbers of figures of speech seem to point in the same direction. 'lovely as a dream', 'I shouldn't have dreamt of such a thing', 'I haven't imagined it in my wildest dreams'. In this, linguistic usage is evidently taking sides. For there are anxiety-dreams as well, and dreams with a distressing or indifferent content, but linguistic usage has been unmoved by them. It is true that it knows of 'bad dreams', but a dream pure and simple is only the sweet fulfilment of a wish. Nor is there any proverb which might tell us that pigs or geese dream of being slaughtered.

It is inconceivable, of course, that the wish-fulfilling characteristic of dreams should not have been noticed by writers on the subject. On the contrary, it has often been noticed; but it has not occurred to any of them to recognize this characteristic as a universal one and to make it into a corner-stone for the explanation of dreams. We can well imagine what it is that has held them back from it and we shall go into the matter later on.

But consider what a large amount of light has been thrown on things by our examination of children's dreams, and with scarcely any effort: the functions of dreams as the guardians of sleep; their origin from two concurrent purposes, one of which, the desire for sleep, remains constant, while the other strives to satisfy a psychical stimulus; proof that dreams are psychical acts with a sense; their two chief characteristics—wish-fulfilment and hallucinatory experience. And in discovering all this we were almost able to forget that we were engaged on psycho-analysis. Apart from its connection with parapraxes, our work has carried no specific mark. Any psychologist, knowing nothing of the postulates of psycho-analysis, might have been able to give this explanation of children's dreams. Why have they not done so?

If dreams of the infantile kind were the only ones, the problem would be solved and our task finished, and that without

[1] [A Hungarian and a Jewish proverb respectively. Cf. *I of D*., 4, 132 and footnote.]

our questioning the dreamer or bringing in the unconscious or resorting to free association. This is evidently where a continuation of our task lies ahead. We have already found repeatedly that characteristics which were claimed as being of general validity have turned out to apply only to a particular sort and number of dreams. The question for us is therefore whether the general characteristics we inferred from children's dreams have a firmer footing, whether they also hold good of dreams which are not transparently clear and whose manifest content gives no sign of being connected with a wish left over from the previous day. It is our view that these other dreams have undergone a far-reaching distortion and for that reason cannot be judged at a first glance. We suspect too that to explain this distortion we shall need the psycho-analytic technique which we have been able to do without in the understanding we have just gained of children's dreams.

In any case, there is yet another class of dreams which are undistorted and, like children's dreams, can easily be recognized as wish-fulfilments. These are the dreams which all through life are called up by imperative bodily needs—hunger, thirst, sexual need—that is, they are wish-fulfilments as reactions to internal somatic stimuli. Thus I have a note of a dream dreamt by a little girl of nineteen months, which consisted of a *menu*, to which her own name was attached. '*Anna F., stwawbewwies, wild stwawbewwies, omblet, pudden*' This was a reaction to a day without food, owing to a digestive upset, which had actually been traced back to the fruit which appeared twice in the dream. The little girl's grandmother—their combined ages came to seventy years—was simultaneously obliged to go without food for a whole day on account of a disturbance due to a floating kidney. She dreamt the same night that she had been 'asked out' and had been served with the most appetizing delicacies.

Observations on prisoners who have been compelled to starve, and on people who have been subjected to privations on travels and explorations, teach us that under these conditions the satisfaction of their needs is regularly dreamt of. Thus Otto Nordenskjold (1904, 1, 336 f.) writes as follows of the members of his expedition while they were wintering in the Antarctic: 'The direction taken by our innermost thoughts was very clearly

shown by our dreams, which were never more vivid or numerous than at this time. Even those of us who otherwise dreamt but rarely had long stories to tell in the morning when we exchanged our latest experiences in this world of the imagination. They were all concerned with the outside world which was now so remote from us, though they were often adapted to our actual circumstances . . . Eating and drinking, however, were the pivot round which our dreams most often revolved. One of us, who had a special gift for attending large luncheon parties during the night, was proud if he was able to report in the morning that he had "got through a three-course dinner". Another of us dreamt of tobacco, of whole mountains of tobacco; while a third dreamt of a ship in full sail coming in across open water. Yet another dream is worth repeating. The postman brought round the mail and gave a long explanation of why we had had to wait so long for it: he had delivered it at the wrong address and had only succeeded in recovering it with great difficulty. We dreamt, of course, of still more impossible things. But there was a most striking lack of imaginativeness shown by almost all the dreams I dreamt myself or heard described. It would certainly be of great psychological interest if all these dreams could be recorded. And it will easily be understood how much we longed for sleep, since it could offer each one of us everything that he most eagerly desired.' So too, according to Du Prel [1885, 231], 'Mungo Park, when he was almost dying of thirst on one of his African journeys, dreamt unceasingly of the well-watered valleys and meadows of his home. Similarly, Baron Trenck, suffering torments of hunger while he was a prisoner in the fortress at Magdeburg, dreamt of being surrounded by sumptuous meals; and George Back, who took part in Franklin's first expedition, when he was almost dying of starvation as a result of his fearful privations, dreamt constantly and regularly of copious meals'.[1]

Anyone who has eaten some highly-spiced dish at dinner and develops a thirst during the night is very likely to dream that he is drinking.[2] It is of course impossible to get rid of a fairly strong need for food or drink by means of a dream. One

[1] [These two quotations appear in *I. of D.*, 4, 131–2, footnote.]

[2] [A detailed analysis of a dream of this kind is given in *I. of D.*, 4, 123 f.]

wakes up from a dream of this sort still feeling thirsty, and has to have a drink of real water. The effect produced by the dream is in this instance trivial from the practical point of view; but it is none the less clear that it was produced with the aim of protecting one's sleep against a stimulus that was urging one to wake up and take action. When the need is of less intensity dreams of satisfaction often help one to get over it.

In the same way, dreams create satisfactions under the influence of sexual stimuli, but these show peculiarities which deserve mention. Since it is characteristic of the sexual instinct to be a degree less dependent on its object than hunger and thirst, the satisfaction in dreams of emission can be a real one; and in consequence of certain difficulties (which I shall have to mention later, in its relation to its object, it happens with special frequency that the real satisfaction is nevertheless attached to a dream content which is obscure or distorted. This characteristic of dreams of emission (as Otto Rank [1912*a*] has pointed out) makes them particularly favourable subjects for the study of dream-distortion.[1] Furthermore, all adult dreams arising from bodily needs usually contain, in addition to the satisfaction, other material which is derived from purely psychical sources of stimulation and requires interpretation before it can be understood.

Moreover I do not mean to assert that the wish-fulfilment dreams of adults which are constructed on infantile lines only appear as reactions to the imperative needs that I have mentioned. We are acquainted as well with short, clear dreams of this sort which, under the influence of some dominant situation, arise out of what are unquestionably psychical sources of stimulation. There are, for instance, dreams of impatience: if someone has made preparations for a journey, for a theatrical performance that is important to him, for going to a lecture or paying a visit, he may dream of a premature fulfilment of his expectation; he may, during the night before the event, see himself arrived at his destination, present at the theatre, in conversation with the person he is going to visit. Or there are what are justly known as dreams of convenience, in which a person who would like to sleep longer dreams that he is already up and is washing, or is already at school, whereas he is really

[1] [This is discussed more fully in *I. of D.*, 5, 402.]

still sleeping and would rather get up in a dream than in reality.[1] The wish to sleep, which we have recognized as regularly playing a part in the construction of dreams, comes into the open in these dreams and reveals itself in them as the essential dream-constructor. There is good reason for ranking the need to sleep alongside of the other great bodily needs.

Here is a reproduction of a picture by Schwind in the Schack Gallery in Munich [see Frontispiece], which shows how correctly the artist grasped the way in which dreams arise from the dominant situation. Its title is 'The Prisoner's Dream', a dream whose content is bound to be his escape. It is a happy point that he is to escape through the window, for it is the stimulus of the light pouring in by the window that is putting an end to the prisoner's sleep. The gnomes who are clambering up on one another no doubt represent the successive positions which he himself would have had to take as he climbed up to the level of the window; and, if I am not mistaken and am not attributing too much deliberation to the artist, the topmost of the gnomes, who is sawing through the bars—that is, who is doing what the prisoner would like to do—has the same features as himself.

In all dreams other than children's dreams and those of an infantile type our path is, as I have said, obstructed by dream-distortion. We cannot tell, to begin with, whether these other dreams too are wish-fulfilments as we suspect, we cannot guess from their manifest content to what psychical stimulus they owe their origin, and we cannot prove that they too are endeavouring to get rid of that stimulus or in some way deal with it. They must be interpreted – that is, translated – their distortion must be undone, and their manifest content replaced by their latent one, before we can form a judgement as to whether what we have found in infantile dreams can claim to be valid for all dreams.

[1] [A dream of this type is reported in *I of D*, 4, 125.]

LECTURE IX

THE CENSORSHIP OF DREAMS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, The study of the dreams of children has taught us the origin, the essential nature and the function of dreams. *Dreams are things which get rid of (psychical) stimuli disturbing to sleep, by the method of hallucinatory satisfaction.* We have, however, only been able to explain one group of the dreams of adults—those which we have described as dreams of an infantile type. What the facts are about the others we cannot yet say, but we do not understand them. We have arrived at a provisional finding, however, whose importance we must not under-estimate. Whenever a dream has been completely intelligible to us, it has turned out to be the hallucinated fulfilment of a wish. This coincidence cannot be a chance one nor a matter of indifference.

We have assumed of dreams of another sort [p. 113 f.], on the basis of various considerations and on the analogy of our views on parapraxes, that they are a distorted substitute for an unknown content, and that the first thing is to trace them back to it. Our immediate task, then, is an enquiry which will lead to an understanding of this *distortion in dreams.*

Dream-distortion is what makes a dream seem strange and unintelligible to us. We want to know a number of things about it: firstly, where it comes from—its dynamics—, secondly, what it does and, lastly, how it does it. We can also say that dream-distortion is carried out by the dream-work; and we want to describe the dream-work and trace it back to the forces operating in it.[1]

And now listen to this dream. It was recorded by a lady belonging to our group,[2] and, as she tells us, was derived from a highly-esteemed and cultivated elderly lady. No analysis was made of the dream; our informant remarks that for a psychoanalyst it needs no interpreting. Nor did the dreamer herself interpret it, but she judged it and condemned it as though she

[1] [The dream-work is discussed in Lecture XI.]

[2] Frau Dr. von Hug-Hellmuth [1915].

understood how to interpret it; for she said of it: 'And disgusting, stupid stuff like this was dreamt by a woman of fifty, who has no other thoughts day and night but worry about her child!' [1]

Here, then, is the dream which deals with 'love services' in war-time.[2] '*She went to Garrison Hospital No. 1 and informed the sentry at the gate that she must speak to the Chief Medical Officer (mentioning a name that was unknown to her) as she wanted to volunteer for service at the hospital. She pronounced the word "service" in such a way that the N.C.O. at once understood that she meant "love service". Since she was an elderly lady, after some hesitation he allowed her to pass. Instead of finding the Chief Medical Officer, however, she reached a large and gloomy apartment in which a number of officers and army doctors were standing and sitting round a long table. She approached a staff surgeon with her request, and he understood her meaning after she had said only a few words. The actual wording of her speech in the dream was: "I and many other women and girls in Vienna are ready to . . ." at this point in the her dream words turned into a mumble ". . . for the troops—officers and other ranks without distinction." She could tell from the expressions on the officers' faces, partly embarrassed and partly sly, that everyone had understood her meaning correctly. The lady went on "I'm aware that our decision must sound surprising, but we mean it in bitter earnest. No one asks a soldier in the field whether he wishes to die or not." There followed an awkward silence of some minutes. The staff surgeon then put his arm round her waist and said "Suppose, madam, it actually came to . . . mumble." She drew away from him, thinking to herself "He's like all the rest of them", and replied "Good gracious, I'm an old woman and I might never come to that. Besides, there's one condition that must be observed: age must be respected. It must never happen that an elderly woman . . . mumble . . . a mere boy. That would be terrible." "I understand perfectly," replied the staff surgeon. Some of the officers, and among them one who had been a suitor of hers in her youth, laughed out loud. The lady then asked to be taken to the Chief Medical Officer, with whom she was*

[1] [This was during the 1914–18 War, in which one of her sons was engaged on active service.]

[2] ['*Liebesdienste*' means in the first instance 'services performed for love', i.e. 'unremunerated services', but it could bear another, less respectable, meaning.]

precisely the objectionable nature of these passages that was the motive for their suppression. Where shall we find a parallel to such an event? You need not look far in these days. Take up any political newspaper and you will find that here and there the text is absent and in its place nothing except the white paper is to be seen. This, as you know, is the work of the press censorship. In these empty places there was something that displeased the higher censorship authorities and for that reason it was removed – a pity, you feel, since no doubt it was the most interesting thing in the paper – the 'best bit'.

On other occasions the censorship has not gone to work on a passage *after* it has already been completed. The author has seen in advance which passages might expect to give rise to objections from the censorship and has on that account toned them down in advance, modified them slightly, or has contented himself with approximations and allusions to what would genuinely have come from his pen. In that case there are no blank places in the paper, but circumlocutions and obscurities of expression appearing at certain points will enable you to guess where regard has been paid to the censorship in advance.

Well, we can keep close to this parallel. It is our view that the omitted pieces of the speeches in the dream which were concealed by a mumble have likewise been sacrificed to a censorship. We speak in so many words of a '*dream-censorship*', to which some share in dream-distortion is to be attributed. Wherever there are gaps in the manifest dream the dream-censorship is responsible for them. We should go further, and regard it as a manifestation of the censorship wherever a dream-element is remembered especially faintly, indefinitely and doubtfully among other elements that are more clearly constructed. But it is only rarely that this censorship manifests itself so undisguisedly – so naively, one might say – as in this example of the dream of 'love services'. The censorship takes effect much more frequently according to the second method, by producing softenings, approximations and allusions instead of the genuine thing.

I know of no parallel in the operations of the press-censorship to a third manner of working by the dream-censorship, but I am able to demonstrate it from precisely the one example of a dream which we have analysed so far. You will recall the dream

acquainted, so that the whole matter could be thrashed out; but she found, to her consternation, that she could not recall his name. Nevertheless, the staff surgeon, most politely and respectfully, showed her the way up to the second floor by a very narrow, iron, spiral staircase, which led directly from the room to the upper storeys of the building. As she went up she heard an officer say "That's a tremendous decision to make no matter whether a woman's young or old! Splendid of her!" Feeling simply that she was doing her duty, she walked up an interminable staircase.

'The dream was repeated twice in the course of a few weeks, with, as the lady remarked, some quite unimportant and meaningless modifications.'[1]

From its continuous nature, the dream resembles a daytime phantasy: there are few breaks in it, and some of the details of its content could have been explained if they had been enquired into, but that, as you know, was not done. But what is remarkable and interesting from our point of view is that the dream shows several gaps—gaps not in the dreamer's memory of the dream but in the content of the dream itself. At three points the content was, as it were, extinguished; the speeches in which these gaps occurred were interrupted by a mumble. As no analysis was carried out, we have, strictly speaking, no right to say anything about the sense of the dream. Nevertheless there are hints on which conclusions can be based for instance, in the phrase 'love services'); but above all, the portions of the speeches immediately preceding the mumbles call for the gaps to be filled in, and in an unambiguous manner. If we make the insertions, the content of the phantasy turns out to be that the dreamer is prepared, by way of fulfilling a patriotic duty, to put herself at the disposal of the troops, both officers and other ranks, for the satisfaction of their erotic needs. This is, of course, highly objectionable, the model of a shameless libidinal phantasy but it does not appear in the dream at all. Precisely at the points at which the context would call for this admission, the manifest dream contains an indistinct mumble, something has been lost or suppressed.

You will, I hope, think it plausible to suppose that it was

[1] [This dream was later in 1919, added as a footnote to *I. of D.*, 4, 142 4.]

of the 'three bad theatre-tickets for 1 florin 50' [p. 122]. In the latent thoughts of that dream the element 'over-hurriedly, too early' stood in the foreground. Thus it was absurd to marry so *early*; it was also absurd to take the theatre-tickets so *early* – it was ridiculous of the sister-in-law to part with her money in such a *hurry* to buy jewellery with it. Nothing of this central element of the dream-thoughts passed over into the manifest dream; in it the central position is taken by the 'going to the theatre' and 'taking the tickets'. As a result of this displacement of accent, this fresh grouping of the elements of the content, the manifest dream has become so unlike the latent dream-thoughts that no-one would suspect the presence of the latter behind the former. This displacement of accent is one of the chief instruments of dream-distortion and it is what gives the dream the strangeness on account of which the dreamer himself is not inclined to recognize it as his own production.

Omission, modification, fresh grouping of the material – these, then, are the activities of the dream-censorship and the instruments of dream-distortion. The dream-censorship itself is the originator, or one of the originators, of the dream-distortion which we are now engaged in examining. We are in the habit of combining the concepts of modification and re-arrangement under the term 'displacement'.

After these remarks on the activities of the dream-censorship, we will now turn to its dynamics. I hope you do not take the term too anthropomorphically, and do not picture the 'censor of dreams' as a severe little manikin or a spirit living in a closet in the brain and there discharging his office; but I hope too that you do not take the term in too 'localizing' a sense, and do not think of a 'brain-centre', from which a censoring influence of this kind issues, an influence which would be brought to an end if the 'centre' were damaged or removed. For the time being it is nothing more than a serviceable term for describing a dynamic relation. The word does not prevent our asking by what purposes[1] this influence is exercised and against what purposes it is directed. And we shall not be surprised to learn that we have come up against the dream-censorship once already, though perhaps without recognizing it.

[1] [Or, here and in what follows, 'trends'. Cf. footnote 1, p. 40 above.]

For that is in fact the case. You will recall that when we began to make use of our technique of free association we made a surprising discovery. We became aware that our efforts at proceeding from the dream-element to the unconscious element for which it is a substitute were being met by a *resistance* [p. 116]. This resistance, we said, could be of different magnitudes, sometimes enormous and sometimes quite insignificant. In the latter case we need to pass through only a small number of intermediate links in our work of interpretation; but when the resistance is large we have to traverse long chains of associations from the dream-element, we are led far away from it and on our path we have to overcome all the difficulties which represent themselves as critical objections to the ideas that occur. What we met with as resistance in our work of interpretation must now be introduced into the dream-work in the form of the dream-censorship. The resistance to interpretation is only a putting into effect[1] of the dream-censorship. It also proves to us that the force of the censorship is not exhausted in bringing about the distortion of dreams and thereafter extinguished, but that the censorship persists as a permanent institution which has as its aim the maintenance of the distortion. Moreover, just as the strength of the resistance varies in the interpretation of each element in a dream, so too the magnitude of the distortion introduced by the censorship varies for each element in the same dream. If we compare the manifest and the latent dream, we shall find that some particular latent elements have been completely eliminated, others modified to a greater or less extent, while yet others have been carried over into the manifest content of the dream unaltered or even perhaps strengthened.

But we wanted to enquire what are the purposes which exercise the censorship and against what purposes it is directed. Now this question, which is fundamental for the understanding of dreams and perhaps, indeed, of human life, is easy to answer

[1] ['*Objektivierung*.' Literally, 'making objective'. The term is used several times in an early paper of Freud's on hypnotic treatment (1892–93) and again in *Studies on Hysteria* (1895*d*), *Standard Ed.*, **2**, 92 3. Freud himself seems to use the term '*Realisierung* (realization)' as a synonym. See Freud (1897*b*), ibid., **3**, 243.]

if we look through the series of dreams which have been interpreted. The purposes which exercise the censorship are those which are acknowledged by the dreamer's waking judgement, those with which he feels himself at one. You may be sure that if you reject an interpretation of one of your own dreams which has been correctly carried out, you are doing so for the same motives for which the dream-censorship has been exercised, the dream-distortion brought about and the interpretation made necessary. Take the dream of our fifty-year-old lady [p. 137]. She thought her dream disgusting without having analysed it, and she would have been still more indignant if Dr. von Hug-Hellmuth had told her anything of its inevitable interpretation; it was precisely because of this condemnation by the dreamer that the objectionable passages in her dream were replaced by a mumble.

The purposes *against* which the dream-censorship is directed must be described in the first instance from the point of view of that agency itself. If so, one can only say that they are invariably of a reprehensible nature, repulsive from the ethical, aesthetic and social point of view—matters of which one does not venture to think at all or thinks only with disgust. These wishes, which are censored and given a distorted expression in dreams, are first and foremost manifestations of an unbridled and ruthless egoism. And, to be sure, the dreamer's own ego appears in every dream and plays the chief part in it, even if it knows quite well how to hide itself so far as the manifest content goes. This '*sacro egoismo*' of dreams is certainly not unrelated to the attitude we adopt when we sleep, which consists in our withdrawing our interest from the whole external world.[1]

The ego, freed from all ethical bonds, also finds itself at one with all the demands of sexual desire, even those which have long been condemned by our aesthetic upbringing and those which contradict all the requirements of moral restraint. The desire for pleasure—the 'Libido', as we call it—chooses its objects without inhibition, and by preference, indeed, the forbidden ones: not only other men's wives, but above all incestuous objects, objects sanctified by the common agreement of man-

[1] [In a footnote added to *I. of D.*, 4, 270 *n.*, in 1925, Freud made some qualification of his statement that dreams are entirely egoistic.]

kind, a man's mother and sister, a woman's father and brother. (The dream of our fifty-year-old lady, too, was incestuous; her libido was unmistakably directed to her son. [Cf. footnote 1, p. 137]) Lusts which we think of as remote from human nature show themselves strong enough to provoke dreams. Hatred, too, rages without restraint. Wishes for revenge and death directed against those who are nearest and dearest in waking life, against the dreamer's parents, brothers and sisters, husband or wife, and his own children are nothing unusual. These censored wishes appear to rise up out of a positive Hell; after they have been interpreted when we are awake, no censorship of them seems to us too severe.

But you must not blame the dream itself on account of its evil content. Do not forget that it performs the innocent and indeed useful function of preserving sleep from disturbance. This wickedness is not part of the essential nature of dreams. Indeed you know too that there are dreams which can be recognized as the satisfaction of justified wishes and of pressing bodily needs. These, it is true, have no dream-distortion; but they have no need of it, for they can fulfil their function without insulting the ethical and aesthetic purposes[1] of the ego. Bear in mind, too, that dream-distortion is proportionate to two factors. On the one hand it becomes greater the worse the wish that has to be censored; but on the other hand it also becomes greater the more severe the demands of the censorship at the moment. Thus a strictly brought-up and prudish young girl, with a relentless censorship, will distort dream-impulses which we doctors, for instance, would have to regard as permissible, harmless, libidinal wishes, and on which in ten years' time the dreamer herself will make the same judgement.

Furthermore, we have not got nearly far enough yet to be able to feel indignant at this result of our work of interpretation. We do not yet, I think, understand it properly; but our first duty is to defend it against certain aspersions. There is no difficulty in finding a weak point in it. Our dream-interpretations are made on the basis of the premisses which we have already accepted [p. 100 f.] that dreams in general have a sense, that it is legitimate to carry across from hypnotic to normal sleep the fact of the existence of mental processes which

[1] [See footnote, p. 140 above.]

are at the time unconscious, and that everything that occurs to the mind is determined. If on the basis of these premisses we had arrived at plausible findings from dream-interpretation, we should have been justified in concluding that the premisses were valid. But how about it if these findings seem to be as I have pictured them? We should then be tempted to say: 'These are impossible, senseless or at the least most improbable findings; so there was something wrong about the premisses. Either dreams are not psychical phenomena, or there is nothing unconscious in the normal state, or our technique has a flaw in it. Is it not simpler and more satisfactory to suppose this rather than accept all the abominations which we are supposed to have discovered on the basis of our premisses?'

Yes, indeed! Both simpler and more satisfactory—but not necessarily on that account more correct. Let us give ourselves time: the matter is not yet ripe for judgement. And first, we can further strengthen the criticism of our dream-interpretations. The fact that the findings from them are so disagreeable and repellent need not, perhaps, carry very great weight. A stronger argument is that the dreamers to whom we are led to attribute such wishful purposes by the interpretation of their dreams reject them most emphatically and for good reasons. 'What?' says one of them, 'you want to convince me from this dream that I regret the money I have spent on my sister's dowry and my brother's education? But that cannot be so. I work entirely for my brothers and sisters, I have no other interest in life but to fulfil my duties to them, which, as the eldest of the family, I promised our departed mother I would do.' Or a woman dreamer would say: 'You think I wish my husband was dead? That is a shocking piece of nonsense! It is not only that we are most happily married—you would probably not believe me if I said that—but his death would rob me of everything I possess in the world.' Or another man would answer us: 'You say that I have sensual desires for my sister? That is ridiculous! She means nothing at all to me. We are on bad terms with each other and I have not exchanged a word with her for years.' We might still take it lightly, perhaps, if these dreamers neither confirmed nor denied the purposes we attribute to them; we might say that these were just things they did not know about themselves. But when they feel in themselves the precise con-

trary of the wish we have interpreted to them and when they are able to prove to us by the lives they lead that they are dominated by this contrary wish, it must surely take us aback. Has not the time come to throw aside the whole work we have done on dream-interpretation as something which its findings have reduced *ad absurdum*?

No, not even now. Even this stronger argument collapses if we examine it critically. Granted that there are unconscious purposes in mental life, nothing is proved by showing that purposes opposed to these are dominant in conscious life. Perhaps there is room in the mind for contrary purposes, for contradictions, to exist side by side. Possibly, indeed, the dominance of one impulse is precisely a necessary condition of its contrary being unconscious. We are after all left, then, with the first objections that were raised: the findings of dream-interpretation are not simple and they are very disagreeable. We may reply to the first that all your passion for what is simple will not be able to solve a single one of the problems of dreams. You must get accustomed here to assuming a complicated state of affairs. And we may reply to the second that you are plainly wrong to use a liking or disliking that you may feel as the ground for a scientific judgement. What difference does it make if the findings of dream-interpretation seem disagreeable to you or, indeed, embarrassing and repulsive? '*Ça n'empêche pas d'exister*', as I heard my teacher Charcot say in a similar case when I was a young doctor.[1] One must be humble and hold back one's sympathies and antipathies if one wants to discover what is real in this world. If a physicist were able to prove to you that in a short period organic life on this earth would be brought to an end by freezing, would you venture to make the same reply to him: 'That cannot be so, the prospect is too disagreeable'? You would, I think, be silent, until another physicist came and pointed out to the first one an error in his premisses or calculations. When you reject something that is disagreeable to you, what you are doing is *repeating* the

[1] [Charcot's remark in full was: 'La théorie, c'est bon, mais ça n'empêche pas d'exister' ('Theory is good; but it doesn't prevent things from existing'). A favourite quotation of Freud's. See his obituary of Charcot (1893*f*), *Standard Ed.*, 3, 13, where the circumstances are described.]

gains an increased importance in its bearing on the view we have taken. We are now prepared to assume that there are in the mind processes and purposes of which one knows nothing at all, has known nothing for a long time, and has even perhaps never known anything. With this the unconscious acquires a new sense for us; the characteristic of 'for the time being' or 'temporary' disappears from its essential nature. It can mean *permanently* unconscious and not merely 'latent at the time'. We shall of course have to hear more about this on some other occasion.

LECTURE X

SYMBOLISM IN DREAMS[1]

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—We have found that the distortion in dreams, which interferes with our understanding of them, is the result of a censoring activity which is directed against unacceptable, unconscious wishful impulses. We have not, of course, maintained that the censorship is the sole factor responsible for the distortion in dreams, and in fact when we study them further we can discover that other factors play a part in producing this result. This amounts to our saying that even if the dream-censorship was out of action we should still not be in a position to understand dreams, the manifest dream would still not be identical with the latent dream-thoughts.

We come upon this other factor which prevents dreams from being lucid, this new contribution to dream-distortion, by noticing a gap in our technique. I have already admitted to you [p. 105] that it does sometimes really happen that nothing occurs to a person under analysis in response to particular elements of his dreams. It is true that this does not happen as often as he asserts; in a great many cases, with perseverance, an idea is extracted from him. But nevertheless there remain cases in which an association fails to emerge or, if it *is* extracted, does not give us what we expected from it. If this happens during a psycho-analytic treatment, it has a peculiar significance with which we are not here concerned.[2] But it also

[1] [As Freud tells us (*J. of D.*, **5**, 350), it was relatively late before he realized the full importance of dream-symbolism, largely under the influence of Wilhelm Stekel (1911). It was not until the fourth (1914) edition of *The Interpretation of Dreams* that a special section was devoted to the subject. That section (Chapter VI, Section E) represents, apart from the present lecture, Freud's main discussion of symbolism. The topic appears, of course, in many other places both in *The Interpretation of Dreams* and in other works throughout Freud's life, and references to these will be found at a few points below. It may be added, however, that the present lecture has claims to being regarded as the most important of all Freud's writings on symbolism.]

[2] [The reference here is to the blocking of free associations by unconscious stirring-up of the transference. Cf. 'The Dynamics of Transference', 1912*b*, *Standard Ed.*, **12**, 103 ff. See also Lecture XXVII below].

happens in the interpretation of normal people's dreams or in that of our own. If we convince ourselves that in such cases no amount of pressure is of any use, we eventually discover that this unwished-for event regularly occurs in connection with particular dream-elements, and we begin to recognize that a fresh general principle is at work where we had begun by thinking we were only faced by an exceptional failure of technique.

In this way we are tempted to interpret these 'mute' dream-elements ourselves, to set about translating them with our own resources. We are then forced to recognize that whenever we venture on making a replacement of this sort we arrive at a satisfactory sense for the dream, whereas it remains senseless and the chain of thought is interrupted so long as we refrain from intervening in this way. An accumulation of many similar cases eventually gives the necessary certainty to what began as a timid experiment.

I am putting all this in a rather schematic way; but that is permissible, after all, for didactic purposes, nor has it been falsified, but merely simplified.

In this way we obtain constant translations for a number of dream-elements—just as popular 'dream-books' provide them for *everything* that appears in dreams. You will not have forgotten, of course, that when we use our *associative* technique constant replacements of dream-elements never come to light.

You will object at once that this method of interpretation strikes you as far more insecure and open to attack than the earlier one by means of free association. There is, however, something further. For when, with experience, we have collected enough of these constant renderings, the time comes when we realize that we should in fact have been able to deal with these portions of dream-interpretation from our own knowledge, and that they could really be understood without the dreamer's associations. How it is that we must necessarily have known their meaning will become clear in the second half of our present discussion.

A constant relation of this kind between a dream-element and its translation is described by us as a 'symbolic' one, and the dream-element itself as a 'symbol' of the unconscious dream-thought. You will recall that earlier, when we were

investigating the relations between dream-elements and the 'genuine' thing behind them, I distinguished three such relations—those of a part to a whole, of allusion and of plastic portrayal. I warned you at the time that there was a fourth, but I did not name it [p. 122]. This fourth relation is the symbolic one which I am now introducing. It gives occasion for some most interesting discussions, and I will turn to them before laying before you the detailed results of our observations of symbolism.

Symbolism is perhaps the most remarkable chapter of the theory of dreams. In the first place, since symbols are stable translations, they realize to some extent the ideal of the ancient as well as of the popular interpretation of dreams, from which, with our technique, we had departed widely. They allow us in certain circumstances to interpret a dream without questioning the dreamer, who indeed would in any case have nothing to tell us about the symbol. If we are acquainted with the ordinary dream-symbols, and in addition with the dreamer's personality, the circumstances in which he lives and the impressions which preceded the occurrence of the dream, we are often in a position to interpret a dream straightaway to translate it at sight, as it were. A piece of virtuosity of this kind flatters the dream-interpreter and impresses the dreamer; it forms an agreeable contrast to the laborious work of questioning the dreamer. But do not allow yourselves to be led astray by this. It is not our business to perform acts of virtuosity Interpretation based on a knowledge of symbols is not a technique which can replace or compete with the associative one. It forms a supplement to the latter and yields results which are only of use when introduced into it. And as regards acquaintance with the dreamer's psychical situation, you must bear in mind that the dreams of people you know well are not the only ones you have to analyse, that you are not as a rule familiar with the events of the previous day, which were the instigators of the dream, but that the associations of the person you are analysing will provide you precisely with a knowledge of what we call the psychical situation.

Moreover it is quite specially remarkable having regard, too, to some considerations which we shall mention later

[cf. p. 160]—that the most violent resistances have been expressed once again to the existence of a symbolic relation between dreams and the unconscious. Even people of judgement and reputation, who, apart from this, have gone a long way in agreeing with psycho-analysis, have at this point withheld their support. This behaviour is all the stranger in view, first, of the fact that symbolism is not peculiar to dreams alone and is not characteristic of them, and, secondly, that symbolism in dreams is by no means a discovery of psycho-analysis, however many other surprising discoveries it has made. The philosopher K. A. Scherner [1861] must be described as the discoverer of dream-symbolism, if its beginning is to be placed in modern times at all. Psycho-analysis has confirmed Scherner's findings, though it has made material modifications in them.

You will now want to hear something of the nature of dream-symbolism and to be given some examples of it. I will gladly tell you what I know, though I must confess that our understanding of it does not go as far as we should like.

The essence of this symbolic relation is that it is a comparison, though not a comparison of *any* sort. Special limitations seem to be attached to the comparison, but it is hard to say what these are. Not everything with which we can compare an object or a process appears in dreams as a symbol for it. And on the other hand a dream does not symbolize every possible element of the latent dream-thoughts but only certain definite ones. So there are restrictions here in both directions. We must admit, too, that the concept of a symbol cannot at present be sharply demarcated: it shades off into such notions as those of a replacement or representation, and even approaches that of an allusion. With a number of symbols the comparison which underlies them is obvious. But again there are other symbols in regard to which we must ask ourselves where we are to look for the common element, the *tertium comparationis*, of the supposed comparison. On further reflection we may afterwards discover it or it may definitely remain concealed. It is strange, moreover, that if a symbol is a comparison it should not be brought to light by an association, and that the dreamer should not be acquainted with it but should make use of it without knowing about it: more than that, indeed, that the dreamer feels no inclination to acknowledge the comparison even after

it has been pointed out to him. You see, then, that a symbolic relation is a comparison of a quite special kind, of which we do not as yet clearly grasp the basis, though perhaps we may later arrive at some indication of it.

The range of things which are given symbolic representation in dreams is not wide: the human body as a whole, parents, children, brothers and sisters, birth, death, nakedness—and something else besides. The one typical—that is regular—representation of the human figure as a whole is a *house*, as was recognized by Scherner, who even wanted to give this symbol a transcendant importance which it does not possess. It may happen in a dream that one finds oneself climbing down the façade of a house, enjoying it at one moment, frightened at another. The houses with smooth walls are men, the ones with projections and balconies that one can hold on to are women [cf. p. 159 below]. One's parents appear in dreams as the *Emperor* and *Empress*, the *King* and *Queen* [loc. cit.] or other honoured personages; so here dreams are displaying much filial piety. They treat children and brothers and sisters less tenderly these are symbolized as *small animals* or *vermin*. Birth is almost invariably represented by something which has a connection with *water*: one either falls into the water or climbs out of it, one rescues someone from the water or is rescued by someone—that is to say, the relation is one of mother to child [cf. p. 160]. Dying is replaced in dreams by *departure*, by a *train journey* [cf. p. 161], being dead by various obscure and, as it were, timid hints, nakedness by *clothes* and *uniforms*. You see how indistinct the boundaries are here between symbolic and allusive representation.

It is a striking fact that, compared with this scanty enumeration, there is another field in which the objects and topics are represented with an extraordinarily rich symbolism. This field is that of sexual life—the genitals, sexual processes, sexual intercourse. The very great majority of symbols in dreams are sexual symbols. And here a strange disproportion is revealed. The topics I have mentioned are few, but the symbols for them are extremely numerous, so that each of these things can be expressed by numbers of almost equivalent symbols. The outcome, when they are interpreted, gives rise to general objection.

For, in contrast to the multiplicity of the representations in the dream, the interpretations of the symbols are very monotonous, and this displeases everyone who hears of it, but what is there that we can do about it?

Since this is the first time I have spoken of the subject-matter of sexual life in one of these lectures, I owe you some account of the way in which I propose to treat the topic. Psycho-analysis finds no occasion for concealments and hints, it does not think it necessary to be ashamed of dealing with this important material, it believes it is right and proper to call everything by its correct name, and it hopes that this will be the best way of keeping irrelevant thoughts of a disturbing kind at a distance. The fact that these lectures are being given before a mixed audience of both sexes can make no difference to this. Just as there can be no science *in usum Delphini*,[1] there can be none for schoolgirls; and the ladies among you have made it clear by their presence in this lecture-room that they wish to be treated on an equality with men.

The male genitals, then, are represented in dreams in a number of ways that must be called symbolic, where the common element in the comparison is mostly very obvious. To begin with, for the male genitals as a whole the sacred number 3 is of symbolic significance [cf. p. 163 f.]. The more striking and for both sexes the more interesting component of the genitals, the male organ, finds symbolic substitutes in the first instance in things that resemble it in shape—things, accordingly, that are long and up-standing, such as *sticks*, *umbrellas*, *posts*, *trees* and so on, further, in objects which share with the thing they represent the characteristic of penetrating into the body and injuring—thus, sharp *weapons* of every kind, *knives*, *daggers*, *spears*, *sabres*, but also fire-arms, *rifles*, *pistols* and *revolvers*, particularly suitable owing to their shape. In the anxiety dreams of girls, being followed by a man with a knife or a fire-arm plays a large part. This is perhaps the commonest instance of dream-symbolism and you will now be able to translate it easily. Nor is there any difficulty in understanding how it is that the male organ can be replaced by objects from which water flows—

[1] [Cf. footnote 2, p. 102.]

water-taps, *watering-cans*, or *fountains*—or again by other objects which are capable of being lengthened, such as *hanging-lamps*, *extensible pencils*, etc. A no less obvious aspect of the organ explains the fact that *pencils*, *pen-holders*, *nail-files*, *hammers*, and other *instruments* are undoubted male sexual symbols.

The remarkable characteristic of the male organ which enables it to rise up in defiance of the laws of gravity, one of the phenomena of erection, leads to its being represented symbolically by *balloons*, *flying-machines* and most recently by *Zeppelin airships*. But dreams can symbolize erection in yet another, far more expressive manner. They can treat the sexual organ as the essence of the dreamer's whole person and make him himself *fly*. Do not take it to heart if dreams of flying, so familiar and often so delightful, have to be interpreted as dreams of general sexual excitement, as erection-dreams. Among students of psycho-analysis, Paul Federn [1914] has placed this interpretation beyond any doubt, but the same conclusion was reached from his investigations by Mourly Vold [1910-12, **2**, 791], who has been so much praised for his sobriety, who carried out the dream-experiments I have referred to [p. 87] with artificially arranged positions of the arms and legs and who was far removed from psycho-analysis and may have known nothing about it. And do not make an objection out of the fact that women can have the same flying dreams as men. Remember, rather, that our dreams aim at being the fulfilments of wishes and that the wish to be a man is found so frequently, consciously or unconsciously, in women. Nor will anyone with a knowledge of anatomy be bewildered by the fact that it is possible for women to realize this wish through the same sensations as men. Women possess as part of their genitals a small organ similar to the male one; and this small organ, the clitoris, actually plays the same part in childhood and during the years before sexual intercourse as the large organ in men.[1]

Among the less easily understandable male sexual symbols are certain *reptiles* and *fishes*, and above all the famous symbol of the *snake*. It is certainly not easy to guess why *hats* and *overcoats* or *cloaks* are employed in the same way, but their symbolic significance is quite unquestionable [cf. p. 157]. And finally we can ask ourselves whether the replacement of the

[1] [This is further discussed on p. 318 below.]

male limb by another limb, the foot or the hand, should be described as symbolic. We are, I think, compelled to do so by the context and by counterparts in the case of women.

The female genitals are symbolically represented by all such objects as share their characteristic of enclosing a hollow space which can take something into itself, by *pits*, *caverns* and *hollows*, for instance, by *vessels* and *bottles*, by *receptacles*, *boxes*, *trunks*, *cases*, *chests*, *pockets*, and so on. *Ships*, too, fall into this category. Some symbols have more connection with the uterus than with the female genitals: thus, *cupboards*, *stoves* and, more especially, *rooms*. Here room-symbolism touches on house-symbolism. *Doors* and *gates*, again, are symbols of the genital orifice. Materials, too, are symbols for women [cf. p. 160]: *wood*, *paper* and objects made of them, like *tables* and *books*. Among animals, *snails* and *mussels* at least are undeniably female symbols; among parts of the body, the *mouth* as a substitute for the genital orifice[1]; among buildings, *churches* and *chapels*. Not every symbol, as you will observe, is equally intelligible.

The breasts must be reckoned with the genitals, and these, like the larger hemispheres of the female body, are represented by *apples*, *peaches*, and *fruit* in general. The pubic hair of both sexes is depicted in dreams as *woods* and *bushes*. The complicated topography of the female genital parts makes one understand how it is that they are often represented as *landscapes*, with rocks, woods and water,[1] while the imposing mechanism of the male sexual apparatus explains why all kinds of complicated machinery which is hard to describe serve as symbols for it.

Another symbol of the female genitals which deserves mention is a *jewel case*.[2] *Jewel* and *treasure* are used in dreams as well as in waking life to describe someone who is loved. *Sweets* frequently represent sexual enjoyment. Satisfaction obtained from a person's own genitals is indicated by all kinds of *playing*, including *piano-playing*. Symbolic representations *par excellence* of masturbation are *gliding* or *sliding* and *pulling off a branch* [cf. p. 104]. The *falling out of a tooth* or the *pulling out of a tooth* is a particularly notable dream-symbol. Its first meaning is

[1] [A dream with a quantity of landscape symbolism is reported below, p. 193.]

[2] [This played a prominent part in the analysis of the first dream in the case history of 'Dora' (1905e), *Standard Ed.*, 7, 64 ff.]

undoubtedly castration as a punishment for masturbating [loc. cit.]. We come across special representations of sexual intercourse less often than might be expected from what has been said so far. Rhythmical activities such as *dancing*, *riding* and *climbing* must be mentioned here, as well as violent experiences such as *being run over;* so, too, certain *manual crafts*, and, of course, *threatening with weapons*.

You must not picture the use or the translation of these symbols as something quite simple. In the course of them all kinds of things happen which are contrary to our expectations. It seems almost incredible, for instance, that in these symbolic representations the differences between the sexes are often not clearly observed. Some symbols signify genitals in general, irrespective of whether they are male or female: for instance, a *small* child, a *small* son or a *small* daughter.[1] Or again, a predominantly male symbol may be used for the female genitals or vice versa. We cannot understand this till we have obtained some insight into the development of sexual ideas in human beings. In some instances the ambiguity of the symbols may only be an apparent one, and the most marked symbols, such as *weapons*, *pockets* and *chests* are excluded from this bisexual use.

I will now go on to make a survey, starting not from the thing represented but from the symbol, of the fields from which sexual symbols are mostly derived, and I will make a few additional remarks, with special reference to the symbols where the common element in the comparison is not understood. The *hat* is an obscure symbol of this kind—perhaps, too, head-coverings in general—with a male significance as a rule, but also capable of a female one.[2] In the same way an *overcoat* or *cloak* means a man, perhaps not always with a genital reference; it is open to you to ask why.[3] Neckties, which hang down and are not worn

[1] [That is, any one of these three may be used in a dream as a symbol for either the male or the female genitals.]

[2] [Hat-symbolism was discussed by Freud in his short paper 'A Connection between a Symbol and a Symptom' (1916*c*), *Standard Ed.*, **14**, 339–40.]

[3] [In *I. of D.*, **5**, 336, Freud suggests that the explanation may be a verbal assonance between '*Mann*' and '*Mantel*' (the German for 'overcoat' or 'cloak'). A further discussion of this symbol occurs in Lecture XXIX of the *New Introductory Lectures* (1933*a*), ibid., **22**, 24.]

by women, are a definitely male symbol. *Underclothing* and *linen* in general are female. *Clothes* and *uniforms*, as we have already seen, are a substitute for nakedness or bodily shapes. *Shoes* and *slippers* are female genitals. *Tables* and *wood* have already been mentioned as puzzling but certainly female symbols. *Ladders, steps* and *staircases*, or, more precisely, walking on them, are clear symbols of sexual intercourse. On reflection, it will occur to us that the common element here is the rhythm of walking up them—perhaps, too, the increasing excitement and breathlessness the higher one climbs [cf. p. 164].

We have earlier referred to *landscapes* as representing the female genitals. *Hills* and *rocks* are symbols of the male organ. *Gardens* are common symbols of the female genitals. *Fruit* stands, not for children, but for the breasts. *Wild animals* mean people in an excited sensual state, and further, evil instincts or passions. *Blossoms* and *flowers* indicate women's genitals, or, in particular, virginity. Do not forget that blossoms are actually the genitals of plants.[1]

We are acquainted already with *rooms* as a symbol. The representation can be carried further, for windows, and doors in and out of rooms, take over the meaning of orifices in the body. And the question of the room being *open* or *locked* fits in with this symbolism, and the *key* that opens it is a decidedly male symbol.

Here, then, is material used for symbolism in dreams. It is not complete and could be carried deeper as well as further. But I fancy it will seem to you more than enough and may even have exasperated you. 'Do I really live in the thick of sexual symbols?' you may ask. 'Are all the objects around me, all the clothes I put on, all the things I pick up, all of them sexual symbols and nothing else?' There is really ground enough for raising astonished questions, and, as a first one, we may enquire how we in fact come to know the meaning of these dream-symbols, upon which the dreamer himself gives us insufficient information or none at all.

My reply is that we learn it from very different sources—from fairy tales and myths, from buffoonery and jokes, from

[1] [A dream with a large amount of flower symbolism is reported in *I. of D.*, **4**, 319 and **5**, 347–8.]

folklore (that is, from knowledge about popular manners and customs, sayings and songs) and from poetic and colloquial linguistic usage. In all these directions we come upon the same symbolism, and in some of them we can understand it without further instruction. If we go into these sources in detail, we shall find so many parallels to dream-symbolism that we cannot fail to be convinced of our interpretations.

According to Scherner, as we have said [p. 153], the human body is often represented in dreams by the symbol of a house. Carrying this representation further, we found that windows, doors and gates stood for openings in the body and that façades of houses were either smooth or provided with balconies and projections to hold on to. But the same symbolism is found in our linguistic usage: when we greet an acquaintance familiarly as an '*altes Haus*' ['old house'], when we speak of giving someone '*eins aufs Dachl*' [a knock on the head, literally, 'one on the roof'], or when we say of someone else that 'he's not quite right in the upper storey'. In anatomy the orifices of the body are in so many words termed '*Leibespforten*' [literally, 'portals of the body'].

It seems surprising at first to find one's parents in dreams as an imperial or royal couple. But it has its parallel in fairy tales. It begins to dawn on us that the many fairy tales which begin 'Once upon a time there were a King and Queen' only mean to say that there were once a father and mother. In a family the children are jokingly called 'princes' and the eldest 'crown prince'. The King himself calls himself the father of his country. We speak of small children jokingly as '*Würmer*' ['worms'] and speak sympathetically of a child as '*der arme Wurm*' ['the poor worm'].

Let us go back to house-symbolism. When in a dream we make use of the projections on houses for catching hold of, we may be reminded of a common vulgar expression for well-developed breasts: 'She's got something to catch hold of.' There is another popular expression in such cases: 'She's got plenty of wood in front of the house', which seems to confirm our interpretation of wood as a female, maternal symbol.

And, speaking of wood, it is hard to understand how that material came to represent what is maternal and female. But here comparative philology may come to our help. Our German

word '*Holz*' seems to come from the same root as the Greek 'ὕλη [hulé]', meaning 'stuff' 'raw material'. This seems to be an instance of the not uncommon event of the general name of a material eventually coming to be reserved for some particular material. Now there is an island in the Atlantic named 'Madeira'. This name was given to it by the Portuguese when they discovered it, because at that time it was covered all over with woods. For in the Portuguese language '*madeira*' means 'wood'. You will notice, however, that '*madeira*' is only a slightly modified form of the Latin word '*materia*', which once more means 'material' in general. But '*materia*' is derived from '*mater*', 'mother'. the material out of which anything is made is, as it were, a mother to it. This ancient view of the thing survives, therefore, in the symbolic use of wood for 'woman' or 'mother'.

Birth is regularly expressed in dreams by some connection with water: one falls into the water or one comes out of the water—one gives birth or one is born. We must not forget that this symbol is able to appeal in two ways to evolutionary truth, Not only are all terrestrial mammals, including man's ancestors. descended from aquatic creatures this is the more remote of the two facts , but every individual mammal, every human being, spent the first phase of its existence in water—namely as an embryo in the amniotic fluid in its mother's uterus, and came out of that water when it was born. I do not say that the dreamer knows this; on the other hand, I maintain that he need not know it. There is something else that the dreamer probably knows from having been told it in his childhood; and I even maintain of that too that his knowledge of it contributed n thing to the construction of the symbol. He was told in his nursery that the stork brings the babies. But where does it fetch them from? From the pond, or from the stream -once again, then, from the water. One of my patients after he had been given this information he was a little Count at the time —disappeared for a whole afternoon. He was found at last lying by the edge of the castle pool, with his little face bending over the surface of the water eagerly peering down to try and see the babies at the bottom. [Cf. p 318 below.]

In myths about the birth of heroes to which Otto Rank [1909] has devoted a comparative study, the oldest being that

of King Sargon of Agade (about 2800 B.C.) a predominant part is played by exposure in the water and rescue from the water. Rank has perceived that these are representations of birth, analogous to those that are usual in dreams. If one rescues someone from the water in a dream, one is making oneself into his mother, or simply into *a* mother. In myths a person who rescues a baby from the water is admitting that she is the baby's true mother. There is a well-known comic anecdote according to which an intelligent Jewish boy was asked who the mother of Moses was. He replied without hesitation, 'The Princess.' 'No', he was told, 'she only took him out of the water.' 'That's what *she* says', he replied, and so proved that he had found the correct interpretation of the myth.[1]

Departure in dreams means dying. So, too, if a child asks where someone is who has died and whom he misses, it is common nursery usage to reply that he has gone on a journey. Once more I should like to contradict the belief that the dream-symbol is derived from this evasion. The dramatist is using the same symbolic connection when he speaks of the after-life as 'the undiscovered country from whose bourn no *traveller* returns'. Even in ordinary life it is common to speak of 'the last journey'. Every one acquainted with ancient rituals is aware of how seriously (in the religion of Ancient Egypt, for instance) the idea is taken of a journey to the land of the dead. Many copies have survived of *The Book of the Dead*, which was supplied to the mummy like a Baedeker to take with him on the journey. Ever since burial-places have been separated from dwelling-places the dead person's last journey has indeed become a reality.

It is just as little the case that genital symbolism is something that is found only in dreams. Every one of you has probably at one time or another spoken impolitely of a woman as an '*alte Schachtel*' ['old box'], perhaps without knowing that you were using a genital symbol. In the New Testament we find woman referred to as 'the weaker vessel'. The Hebrew scriptures, written in a style that comes close to poetry, are full of sexually symbolic expressions, which have not always been correctly understood and whose exegesis (for instance, in the case of the

[1] [Freud used this 'correct interpretation of the myth' as the basis of his last work, *Moses and Monotheism* (1939*a*).]

Song of Solomon[1]) has led to some misunderstandings. In later Hebrew literature it is very common to find a woman represented by a house, whose door stands for the sexual orifice. A man complains, for instance, in a case of lost virginity, that he has 'found the door open'. So, too, the symbol of a table for a woman in these writings. Thus, a woman says of her husband, 'I laid the table for him, but he turned it round.' Lame children are said to come about through the man's 'turning the table round'. I take these examples from a paper by Dr. L. Levy of Brünn [1914].

The fact that ships, too, in dreams stand for women is made credible by the etymologists, who tell us that '*Schiff* [ship]' was originally the name of an earthenware vessel and is the same word as '*Schaff*' [a dialect word meaning 'tub']. That ovens represent women and the uterus is confirmed by the Greek legend of Periander of Corinth and his wife Melissa. The tyrant, according to Herodotus, conjured up the shade of his wife, whom he had loved passionately but had murdered out of jealousy, to obtain some information from her. The dead woman proved her identity by saying that he (Periander) had '*pushed his bread into a cold oven*', as a disguise for an event which no one else could know of. In the periodical *Anthropophyteia*, edited by F. S. Krauss, an invaluable source of knowledge of sexual anthropology,[2] we learn that in a particular part of Germany they say of a woman who has given birth to a child that '*her oven has come to pieces*'. Kindling fire, and everything to do with it, is intimately interwoven with sexual symbolism. Flame is always a male genital, and the hearth is its female counterpart.

If you may have felt surprised at the frequency with which landscapes are used in dreams to represent the female genitals, you can learn from mythology the part played by *Mother Earth* in the concepts and cults of the peoples of antiquity and how their view of agriculture was determined by this symbolism. You will perhaps be inclined to trace the fact that in dreams a room represents a woman to the common usage in our language by which '*Frau*' is replaced by '*Frauenzimmer*'[3] the

[1] [Some examples are given in *I. of D.*, **5**, 346.]

[2] [Cf. Freud's appreciative letter to Krauss (1909).]

[3] [Literally 'woman's apartment'. The word is very often used in German as a slightly derogatory synonym for 'woman'.]

human being is replaced by the apartment allotted to her. Similarly we speak of the 'Sublime Porte'[1], meaning the Sultan and his government. So too the title of the Ancient Egyptian ruler, 'Pharaoh', means simply 'Great Courtyard'. (In the Ancient East the courts between the double gateways of a city were public meeting-places like the market-places of the classical world.) This derivation, however, appears to be too superficial. It seems to me more likely that a room became the symbol of a woman as being the space which encloses human beings. We have already found 'house' used in a similar sense; and mythology and poetical language enable us to add 'city', 'citadel', 'castle' and 'fortress' as further symbols for 'woman'. The question could be easily settled from the dreams of people who do not speak or understand German. During the last few years I have mainly treated foreign-speaking patients, and I seem to remember that in their dreams too '*Zimmer*' ['room'I meant '*Frauenzimmer*', though they had no similar usage in their languages. There are other indications that the symbolic relation can go beyond the limits of language—which, incidentally was asserted long ago by an old investigator of dreams, Schubert [1814]. However, none of my dreamers were completely ignorant of German, so the decision must be left to psychoanalysts who can collect data from unilingual people in other countries.

There is scarcely one of the symbolic representations of the male genitals which does not recur in joking, vulgar or poetic usage, especially in the ancient classical dramatists. But here we meet not only the symbols which appear in dreams, but others besides—for instance tools employed in various operations, and particularly the plough. Moreover, the symbolic representation of masculinity leads us to a very extensive and much disputed region, which, on grounds of economy, we shall avoid. I should like, however, to devote a few words to one symbol, which, as it were, falls outside this class—the number 3.[2] Whether this number owes its sacred character to this symbolic connection remains undecided. But what seems certain is that a number of tripartite things that occur in nature—the clover leaf, for

[1] [Literally, 'Gateway', the old diplomatic term for the Ottoman Court at Constantinople before 1923, derived *via* the French from the Turkish title.]

[2] [Cf. p. 220 below.]

instance owe their use for coats of arms and emblems to this symbolic meaning. Similarly, the tripartite lily (the so-called *fleur-de-lis*) and the remarkable heraldic device of two islands so far apart as Sicily and the Isle of Man (the *triskeles* (three bent legs radiating from a centre,) – seem to be stylized versions of the male genitals. Likenesses of the male organ were regarded in antiquity as the most powerful *apotropaic* (means of defence) against evil influences, and, in conformity with this, the lucky charms of our own day can all be easily recognized as genital or sexual symbols. Let us consider a collection of such things as they are worn, for instance, in the form of small silver hanging trinkets: a four-leaved clover, a pig, a mushroom, a horse-shoe, a ladder, a chimney-sweep. The four-leaved clover has taken the place of the three-leaved one which is really stated to be a symbol. The pig is an ancient fertility symbol. The mushroom is an undoubted penis-symbol: there are mushrooms [fungi] which owe their systematic name (*Phallus impudicus*) to their unmistakable resemblance to the male organ. The horseshoe copies the outline of the female genital orifice, while the chimney-sweep, who carries the ladder, appears in this company on account of his activities, with which sexual intercourse is vulgarly compared. (Cf. *Anthropophyteia*.) We have made the acquaintance of his ladder in dreams as a sexual symbol; here German linguistic usage comes to our help and shows us how the word '*steigen*' ['to climb', or 'to mount'] is used in what is *par excellence* a sexual sense. We say '*den Frauen nachsteigen*' ['to run' (literally 'climb') 'after women'], and '*ein alter Steiger*' ['an old rake' (literally 'climber')]. In French, in which the word for steps on a staircase is '*marches*', we find a precisely analogous term '*un vieux marcheur*'. The fact that in many large animals climbing or 'mounting' on the female is a necessary preliminary to sexual intercourse probably fits into this context.[1]

'Pulling off a branch' as a symbolic representation of masturbation is not merely in harmony with vulgar descriptions of the act[2] but has far-reaching mythological parallels. But that masturbation, or rather the punishment for it (castration—, should be represented by the falling out or pulling out of teeth

[1] [This is largely repeated from Freud's Nuremberg Congress paper (1910*d*), *Standard Ed.*, **11**, 143.]

[2] [Cf. the English 'tossing off'.]

is especially remarkable, since there is a counterpart to it in anthropology which can be known to only a very small number of dreamers. There seems to me no doubt that the circumcision practised by so many peoples is an equivalent and substitute for castration. And we now learn that certain primitive tribes in Australia carry out circumcision as a puberty rite (at the festival to celebrate a boy's attaining sexual maturity), while other tribes, their near neighbours, have replaced this act by the knocking out of a tooth.

Here I bring my account of these specimens to an end. They are only specimens. We know more on the subject; but you may imagine how much richer and more interesting a collection like this would be if it were brought together, not by amateurs like us, but by real professionals in mythology, anthropology, philology and folklore.

A few consequences force themselves on our notice; they cannot be exhaustive, but they offer us food for reflection.

In the first place we are faced by the fact that the dreamer has a symbolic mode of expression at his disposal which he does not know in waking life and does not recognize. This is as extraordinary as if you were to discover that your housemaid understood Sanskrit, though you know that she was born in a Bohemian village and never learnt it. It is not easy to account for this fact by the help of our psychological views. We can only say that the knowledge of symbolism is unconscious[1] to the dreamer, that it belongs to his unconscious mental life. But even with this assumption we do not meet the point. Hitherto it has only been necessary for us to assume the existence of unconscious endeavours—endeavours, that is, of which, temporarily or permanently, we know nothing. Now, however, it is a question of more than this, of unconscious pieces of knowledge, of connections of thought, of comparisons between different objects which result in its being possible for one of them to be regularly put in place of the other. These comparisons are not freshly made on each occasion; they lie ready to hand and are complete, once and for all. This is implied by the fact of their agreeing in the case of different individuals possibly, indeed, agreeing in spite of differences of language. What can

[1] [Cf. footnote, p. 21.]

be the origin of these symbolic relations? Linguistic usage covers only a small part of them. The multiplicity of parallels in other spheres of knowledge are mostly unknown to the dreamer; we ourselves have been obliged to collect them laboriously.

Secondly, these symbolic relations are not something peculiar to dreamers or to the dream-work through which they come to expression. This same symbolism, as we have seen, is employed by myths and fairy tales, by the people in their sayings and songs, by colloquial linguistic usage and by the poetic imagination. The field of symbolism is immensely wide, and dream-symbolism is only a small part of it; indeed, it serves no useful purpose to attack the whole problem from the direction of dreams. Many symbols which are commonly used elsewhere appear in dreams very seldom or not at all. Some dream-symbols are not to be found in all other fields but only, as you have seen, here and there. One gets an impression that what we are faced with here is an ancient but extinct mode of expression, of which different pieces have survived in different fields, one piece only here, another only there, a third, perhaps, in slightly modified forms in several fields. And here I recall the phantasy of an interesting psychotic patient, who imagined a 'basic language' of which all these symbolic relations would be residues.[1]

Thirdly, it must strike you that the symbolism in the other fields I have mentioned is by no means solely sexual symbolism, whereas in dreams symbols are used almost exclusively for the expression of sexual objects and relations. This is not easily explained either. Are we to suppose that symbols which originally had a sexual significance later acquired another application and that, furthermore, the toning-down of representation by symbols into other kinds of representation may be connected with this? These questions can evidently not be answered so long as we have considered dream-symbolism alone. We can only hold firmly to the suspicion that there is a specially intimate relation between true symbols and sexuality.

In this connection we have been given an important hint

[1] [This was Senatspräsident Schreber, whose case history was analysed by Freud (1911), *Standard Ed.*, **12**, 24.]

during the last few years. A philologist, Hans Sperber [1912], of Uppsala, who works independently of psycho-analysis, has put forward the argument that sexual needs have played the biggest part in the origin and development of speech. According to him, the original sounds of speech served for communication, and summoned the speaker's sexual partner; the further development of linguistic roots accompanied the working activities of primal man. These activities, he goes on, were performed in common and were accompanied by rhythmically repeated utterances. In this way a sexual interest became attached to work. Primal man made work acceptable, as it were, by treating it as an equivalent and substitute for sexual activity. The words enunciated during work in common thus had two meanings; they denoted sexual acts as well as the working activity equated with them. As time went on, the words became detached from the sexual meaning and fixed to the work. In later generations the same thing happened with new words, which had a sexual meaning and were applied to new forms of work. In this way a number of verbal roots would have been formed, all of which were of sexual origin and had subsequently lost their sexual meaning. If the hypothesis I have here sketched out is correct, it would give us a possibility of understanding dream-symbolism. We should understand why dreams, which preserve something of the earliest conditions, have such an extraordinarily large number of sexual symbols, and why, in general, weapons and tools always stand for what is male, while materials and things that are worked upon stand for what is female. The symbolic relation would be the residue of an ancient verbal identity; things which were once called by the same name as the genitals could now serve as symbols for them in dreams.

The parallels we have found to dream-symbolism also allow us to form an estimate of the characteristic of psycho-analysis which enables it to attract general interest in a way in which neither psychology nor psychiatry has succeeded in doing. In the work of psycho-analysis links are formed with numbers of other mental sciences, the investigation of which promises results of the greatest value: links with mythology and philology, with folklore, with social psychology and the theory of religion. You will not be surprised to hear that a periodical

has grown up on psycho-analytic soil whose sole aim is to foster these links. This periodical is known as *Imago*, founded in 1912 and edited by Hanns Sachs and Otto Rank.[1] In all these links the share of psycho-analysis is in the first instance that of giver and only to a less extent that of receiver. It is true that this brings it an advantage in the fact that its strange findings become more familiar when they are met with again in other fields; but on the whole it is psycho-analysis which provides the technical methods and the points of view whose application in these other fields should prove fruitful. The mental life of human individuals, when subjected to psycho-analytic investigation, offers us the explanations with the help of which we are able to solve a number of riddles in the life of human communities or at least to set them in a true light.

Incidentally, I have said nothing at all to you yet as to the circumstances in which we can obtain our deepest insight into the hypothetical 'primal language' and as to the field in which most of it has survived. Until you know this you cannot form an opinion of its whole significance. For this field is that of the neuroses and its material is the symptoms and other manifestations of neurotic patients, for the explanation and treatment of which psycho-analysis was, indeed, created.

The fourth of my reflections takes us back to the beginning and directs us along our prescribed path. I have said [p. 149] that even if there were no dream-censorship dreams would still not be easily intelligible to us, for we should still be faced with the task of translating the symbolic language of dreams into that of our waking thought. Thus symbolism is a second and independent factor in the distortion of dreams, alongside of the dream-censorship. It is plausible to suppose, however, that the dream-censorship finds it convenient to make use of symbolism, since it leads towards the same end—the strangeness and incomprehensibility of dreams.

It will shortly become clear whether a further study of dreams may not bring us up against yet another factor that contributes to the distortion of dreams. But I should not like to leave the subject of dream-symbolism without once more [p. 152] touch-

[1] [It ceased publication in 1941. A journal with a similar aim, *The American Imago*, was founded by Hanns Sachs in Boston in 1939.]

ing on the problem of how it can meet with such violent resistance in educated people when the wide diffusion of symbolism in myths, religion, art and language is so unquestionable. May it not be that what is responsible is once again its connection with sexuality?

LECTURE XI

THE DREAM-WORK[1]

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, When you have thoroughly grasped the dream-censorship and representation by symbols, you will not yet, it is true, have completely mastered the distortion in dreams, but you will nevertheless be in a position to understand most dreams. In doing so you will make use of both of the two complementary techniques: calling up ideas that occur to the dreamer till you have penetrated from the substitute to the genuine thing and, on the ground of your own knowledge, replacing the symbols by what they mean. Later on we shall discuss some uncertainties that arise in this connection.

We can now take up once more a task that we tried to carry out previously with inadequate means, when we were studying the relations between the elements of dreams and the genuine things they stood for. We laid down four main relations of the kind [p. 120 ff.] the relation of a part to a whole, approximation or allusion, the symbolic relation and the plastic representation of words. We now propose to undertake the same thing on a larger scale, by comparing the manifest content of a dream *as a whole* with the latent dream as it is revealed by interpretation.

I hope you will never again confuse these two things with each other. If you reach that point, you will probably have gone further in understanding dreams than most readers of my *Interpretation of Dreams*. And let me remind you once again that the work which transforms the latent dream into the manifest one is called the *dream-work*. The work which proceeds in the contrary direction, which endeavours to arrive at the latent dream from the manifest one, is our *work of interpretation*. This work of interpretation seeks to undo the dream-work. The dreams of infantile type which we recognize as obvious fulfilments of wishes have nevertheless experienced some amount of dream-work - they have been transformed from a wish into an actual experience and also, as a rule, from thoughts into visual images.

[1] [The whole of Chapter VI of *I. of D.* (over a third of the entire book) is devoted to the dream-work.]

In their case there is no need for interpretation but only for undoing these two transformations. The additional dream-work that occurs in other dreams is called 'dream-distortion', and this has to be undone by our work of interpretation.

Having compared the interpretations of numerous dreams, I am in a position to give you a summary description of what the dream-work does with the material of the latent dream-thoughts. I beg you, however, not to try to understand too much of what I tell you. It will be a piece of description which should be listened to with quiet attention.

The first achievement of the dream-work is *condensation*.[1] By that we understand the fact that the manifest dream has a smaller content than the latent one, and is thus an abbreviated translation of it. Condensation can on occasion be absent; as a rule it is present, and very often it is enormous. It is never changed into the reverse, that is to say, we never find that the manifest dream is greater in extent or content than the latent one. Condensation is brought about (1) by the total omission of certain latent elements, (2) by only a fragment of some complexes in the latent dream passing over into the manifest one and (3) by latent elements which have something in common being combined and fused into a single unity in the manifest dream.

If you prefer it, we can reserve the term 'condensation' for the last only of these processes. Its results are particularly easy to demonstrate. You will have no difficulty in recalling instances from your own dreams of different people being condensed into a single one. A composite figure of this kind may look like A perhaps, but may be dressed like B, may do something that we remember C doing, and at the same time we may know that he is D. This composite structure is of course emphasizing something that the four people have in common. It is possible, naturally, to make a composite structure out of things or places in the same way as out of people, provided that the various things and places have in common something which is emphasized by the latent dream. The process is like constructing a new and transitory concept which has this common

[1] [Condensation is discussed, with numerous examples, in Section A of Chapter VI of *I. of D.*, 4, 279 ff.]

element as its nucleus. The outcome of this superimposing of the separate elements that have been condensed together is as a rule a blurred and vague image, like what happens if you take several photographs on the same plate.[1]

The production of composite structures like these must be of great importance to the dream-work, since we can show that, where in the first instance the common elements necessary for them were missing, they are deliberately introduced for instance, through the choice of the words by which a thought is expressed. We have already come across condensations and composite structures of this sort. They played a part in the production of some slips of the tongue. You will recall the young man who referred to '*Vogelwiese*' ['*Vogel*' = 'bird' + '*Wiese*' = 'meadow'] instead of '*Vogelwiese*' ['*Vogel*' = 'bird' + '*Belladonna*' = 'deadly nightshade'], p. 55, a lady. Moreover, there are jokes of which the technique is based on a condensation like this.[2] But apart from these cases, it may be said that the process is something quite unusual and strange. It is true that counterparts to the construction of these composite figures are to be found in some creations of our imagination, which is ready to combine into a unity components of things that do not belong together in our experience—in the centaurs, for instance, and the fabulous beasts which appear in ancient mythology or in Böcklin's pictures. The 'creative' imagination, indeed, is quite incapable of *inventing* anything, it can only combine components that are strange to one another. But the remarkable thing about the procedure of the dream-work lies in what follows. The material offered to the dream-work consists of thoughts—a few of which may be objectionable and unacceptable, but which are correctly constructed and expressed. The dream-work puts these thoughts into another form, and it is a strange and incomprehensible fact that in making this translation—this rendering, as it were, into another script or language—these methods of merging or combining are brought into use. After all, a translation normally endeavours to preserve the distinctions made in the text and particularly to keep things that are similar separate. The dream-work, quite the contrary, tries to condense

[1] [Freud more than once compared the result of condensation with Francis Galton's 'composite photographs', e.g. *I of D*, **4**, 133.]

[2] [This technique is discussed, with many examples, in the first section of Chapter II of Freud's book on jokes (1905*c*), *Standard Ed.*, **8**, 16 ff.]

two different thoughts by seeking out (like a joke) an ambiguous word in which the two thoughts may come together. We need not try to understand this feature all at once, but it may become important for our appreciation of the dream-work.

But although condensation makes dreams obscure, it does not give one the impression of being an effect of the dream-censorship. It seems traceable rather to some mechanical or economic factor, but in any case the censorship profits by it.

The achievements of condensation can be quite extraordinary. It is sometimes possible by its help to combine two quite different latent trains of thought into one manifest dream, so that one can arrive at what appears to be a sufficient interpretation of a dream and yet in doing so can fail to notice a possible 'over-interpretation'.[1]

In regard to the connection between the latent and the manifest dream, condensation results also in no simple relation being left between the elements in the one and the other. A manifest element may correspond simultaneously to several latent ones, and, contrariwise, a latent element may play a part in several manifest ones—there is, as it were, a criss-cross relationship [cf. p. 125]. In interpreting a dream, moreover, we find that the associations to a single manifest element need not emerge in succession: we must often wait till the whole dream has been interpreted.

Thus the dream-work carries out a very unusual kind of transcription of the dream-thoughts: it is not a word-for-word or a sign-for-sign translation; nor is it a selection made according to fixed rules—as though one were to reproduce only the consonants in a word and to leave out the vowels; nor is it what might be described as a representative selection—one element being invariably chosen to take the place of several; it is something different and far more complicated.

The second achievement of the dream-work is *displacement*.[2] Fortunately we have made some preliminary examination of

[1] [This is commented on at several points in *I. of D.*, e.g., 5, 523. An example of such a second interpretation will be found ibid., 4, 149.]

[2] [Displacement is the subject of Section B of Chapter VI of *I. of D.*, 4, 305 ff.; but it comes up for discussion at a great many other places in the book.]

this: for we know that it is entirely the work of the dream-censorship. It manifests itself in two ways. In the first, a latent element is replaced not by a component part of itself but by something more remote—that is, by an allusion, and in the second, the psychical accent is shifted from an important element on to another which is unimportant, so that the dream appears differently centred and strange.

Replacing something by an allusion to it is a process familiar in our waking thought as well, but there is a difference. In waking thought the allusion must be easily intelligible, and the substitute must be related in its subject-matter to the genuine thing it stands for. Jokes, too, often make use of allusion. They drop the precondition of there being an association in subject-matter, and replace it by unusual external[1] associations such as similarity of sound, verbal ambiguity, and so on. But they retain the precondition of intelligibility: a joke would lose all its efficiency if the path back from the allusion to the genuine thing could not be followed easily.[2] The allusions employed for displacement in dreams have set themselves free from both of these restrictions. They are connected with the element they replace by the most external and remote relations and are therefore unintelligible, and when they are undone, their interpretation gives the impression of being a bad joke[3] or of an arbitrary and forced explanation dragged in by the hair of its head. For the dream-censorship only gains its end if it succeeds in making it impossible to find the path back from the allusion to the genuine thing.

Displacement of accent is unheard-of as a method of expressing thoughts. We sometimes make use of it in waking thought in order to produce a comic effect. I can perhaps call up the impression it produces of going astray if I recall an anecdote. There was a blacksmith in a village, who had committed a capital offence. The Court decided that the crime must be

[1] [An 'external' association is one that is based not on the *meaning* of the two associated words, but on superficial connections (such as similarity of sound) or purely accidental ones.]

[2] [An account of the 'allusion' technique of jokes with a number of examples appears in Section II of Chapter II of the book on jokes (1905), *Standard Ed.*, 8, 74 ff. The necessity for their being easily intelligible is discussed ibid., 150.]

[3] [This is further discussed on p. 235 f. below.]

punished; but as the blacksmith was the only one in the village and was indispensable, and as on the other hand there were three tailors living there, one of *them* was hanged instead.[1]

The third achievement of the dream-work is psychologically the most interesting. It consists in transforming thoughts into visual images.[2] Let us keep it clear that this transformation does not affect *everything* in the dream-thoughts; some of them retain their form and appear as thoughts or knowledge in the manifest dream as well; nor are visual images the only form into which thoughts are transformed. Nevertheless they comprise the essence of the formation of dreams; this part of the dream-work is, as we already know, the second most regular one [p. 129], and we have already made the acquaintance of the 'plastic' representation of words in the case of individual dream-elements [p. 121].

It is clear that this achievement is not an easy one. To form some idea of its difficulties, let us suppose that you have undertaken the task of replacing a political leading article in a newspaper by a series of illustrations. You will thus have been thrown back from alphabetic writing to picture writing. In so far as the article mentioned people and concrete objects you will replace them easily and perhaps even advantageously by pictures; but your difficulties will begin when you come to the representation of abstract words and of all those parts of speech which indicate relations between thoughts—such as particles, conjunctions and so on. In the case of abstract words you will be able to help yourselves out by means of a variety of devices. For instance, you will endeavour to give the text of the article a different wording, which may perhaps sound less usual but which will contain more components that are concrete and capable of being represented. You will then recall that most abstract words are 'watered-down' concrete ones, and you will for that reason hark back as often as possible to the original concrete meaning of such words. Thus you will be pleased to find

[1] [This was a favourite anecdote of Freud's. He told it ten years earlier than this in his book on jokes (1905*c*, *Standard Ed.*, **8**, 206, and again eight years later in *The Ego and the Id* (1923*b*), ibid., **19**, 45.]

[2] [The main discussion of this is in Section C of Chapter VI of *I. of D.*, **4**, 310 ff.]

that you can represent the 'possession' of an object by a real, physical sitting down on it.[1] And the dream-work does just the same thing. In such circumstances you will scarcely be able to expect very great accuracy from your representation; similarly, you will forgive the dream-work for replacing an element so hard to put into pictures as, for example, 'adultery' ['*Ehebruch*', literally, 'breach of marriage'], by another breach—a broken leg ['*Beinbruch*'].[2] And in this way you will succeed to

[1] [The German word '*besitzen*' ('to possess') is more obviously connected with *sitzen* than its English equivalent 'sitzen' = 'to sit'. An example of 'sitting down on' in a dream with the meaning of 'possession' occurs in one of the dreams of 'Little Hans'. See Section II of his case history (1909*b*), *Standard Ed.*, 10, 8 and 99.]

[2] While I am correcting the proofs of these pages chance has put into my hands a newspaper cutting which offers an unexpected confirmation of what I have written above:—

'DIVINE PUNISHMENT

'*A Broken Arm for a Broken Marriage.*

'Frau Anna M., wife of a municipal man, sued Frau Katherine K. for adultery. According to the statement of claim Frau K. had carried on an adulterous relationship with Karl M., whose own husband was at the front and was certainly making her an allowance of 70 Kreuzer a day [£0.1.0 or $.27] a month. Frau K. had already received a considerable amount of money from the plaintiff's husband when she and her child had to live in hunger and poverty. Fellow-soldiers of her husband had informed her that Frau K. had visited taverns with M. and had sat there drinking in far into the night. On one occasion the defendant had asked the plaintiff's husband in the presence of several other soldiers whether he would like to get a decent woman "instead of a whore" and set up with her. Frau K.'s caretaker also reported that she had repeatedly seen the plaintiff's husband in the house most incompletely dressed.

'Before a court in the Leopoldstadt [district of Vienna] Frau K. yesterday denied knowing M., so that there could be no question of her having intimate relations with him.

'A witness, Albertine M., stated, however, that she had surprised Frau K. kissing the plaintiff's husband.

'At a previous hearing M., under examination as a witness, had denied having intimate relations with the defendant. Yesterday the Judge received a letter in which the witness withdrew the statements he had made on the earlier occasion and admitted that he had had a love-affair with Frau K. up till the previous June. He had only denied his relations with the defendant at the former hearing because she had come to him before the hearing and begged him on her knees to save her and say nothing. "Today", the witness wrote, "I feel compelled

some extent in compensating for the clumsiness of the picture writing that is supposed to take the place of the alphabetic script.

For representing the parts of speech which indicate relations between thoughts—'because', 'therefore', 'however', etc.—you will have no similar aids at your disposal; those constituents of the text will be lost so far as translation into pictures goes. In the same way, the dream-work reduces the content of the dream-thoughts to its raw material of objects and activities. You will feel pleased if there is a possibility of in some way hinting, through the subtler details of the pictures, at certain relations not in themselves capable of being represented. And just so does the dream-work succeed in expressing some of the content of the latent dream-thoughts by peculiarities in the *form* of the manifest dream—by its clarity or obscurity, by its division into several pieces, and so on. The number of part-dreams into which a dream is divided usually corresponds to the number of main topics or groups of thoughts in the latent dream. A short introductory dream will often stand in the relation of a prelude to a following, more detailed, main dream or may give the motive for it[1], a subordinate clause in the dream-thoughts will be replaced by the interpolation of a change of scene into the manifest dream, and so on. Thus the form of dreams is far from being without significance and itself calls for interpretation. When several dreams occur during the same night, they often have the same meaning and indicate that an attempt is being made to deal more and more efficiently with a stimulus of increasing insistence.[2] In individual dreams a particularly difficult element may be represented by several symbols —by 'doublets'.[3]

If we make a series of comparisons between the dream-thoughts and the manifest dreams which replace them, we

to make a full confession to the Court, for I have broken my left arm and this seems to me to be a divine punishment for my wrong-doing."

'The Judge stated that the penal offence had lapsed under the statute of limitations. The plaintiff then withdrew her claim and the defendant was discharged.'

[1] [This is discussed, with an example, in *I. of D.*, 4, 314–16.]

[2] [Cf. ibid., 333–5.]

[3] [In philology the term is used of two different words with the same etymology: e.g. 'fashion' and 'faction', both from the Latin '*factio*'.]

shall come upon all kinds of things for which we are unprepared: for instance, that nonsense and absurdity in dreams have their meaning. At this point, indeed, the contrast between the medical and the psycho-analytic view of dreams reaches a pitch of acuteness not met with elsewhere. According to the former, dreams are senseless because mental activity in dreams has abandoned all its powers of criticism; according to our view, on the contrary, dreams become senseless when a piece of criticism included in the dream-thoughts—a judgement that 'this is absurd'—has to be represented. The dream you are familiar with of the visit to the theatre ('three tickets for 1 florin 50') [p. 122] is a good example of this. The judgement it expressed was: 'it was absurd to marry so early.' [1]

Similarly, in the course of our work of interpretation we learn what it is that corresponds to the doubts and uncertainties which the dreamer so often expresses as to whether a particular element occurred in a dream, whether it was this or whether, on the contrary, it was something else. There is as a rule nothing in the latent dream-thoughts corresponding to these doubts and uncertainties; they are entirely due to the activity of the dream-censorship and are to be equated with an attempt at elimination which has not quite succeeded.[2]

Among the most surprising findings is the way in which the dream-work treats contraries that occur in the latent dream. We know already [p. 171] that conformities in the latent material are replaced by condensations in the manifest dream. Well, contraries are treated in the same way as conformities, and there is a special preference for expressing them by the same manifest element. Thus an element in the manifest dream which is capable of having a contrary may equally well be expressing either itself or its contrary or both together: only the sense can decide which translation is to be chosen. This connects with the further fact that a representation of 'no'—or at any rate an unambiguous one—is not to be found in dreams.

A welcome analogy to this strange behaviour of the dream-

[1] [Absurdity in dreams is discussed in Section G of Chapter VI of *I. of D.*, 5, 426–45.]

[2] [Cf. ibid., 5, 515–17. Doubt as a symptom of obsessional neurosis is discussed in Lecture XVII (p. 259 f. below).]

work is provided for us in the development of language. Some philologists have maintained that in the most ancient languages contraries such as 'strong—weak', 'light—dark', 'big—small' are expressed by the same verbal roots. (What we term 'the antithetical meaning of primal words.') Thus in Ancient Egyptian '*ken*' originally meant 'strong' and 'weak'. In speaking, misunderstanding from the use of such ambivalent words was avoided by differences of intonation and by the accompanying gesture, and in writing, by the addition of what is termed a 'determinative'—a picture which is not itself intended to be spoken. For instance, '*ken*' meaning 'strong' was written with a picture of a little upright man after the alphabetic signs; when '*ken*' stood for 'weak', what followed was the picture of a man squatting down limply. It was only later, by means of slight modifications of the original homologous word, that two distinct representations were arrived at of the contraries included in it. Thus from '*ken*' 'strong—weak' were derived '*ken*' 'strong' and '*kan*' weak'. The remains of this ancient antithetical meaning seem to have been preserved not only in the latest developments of the oldest languages but also in far younger ones and even in some that are still living. Here is some evidence of this, derived from K. Abel (1884).[1]

In Latin, words that remained ambivalent in this way are '*altus*' ('high' and 'deep') and '*sacer*' ('sacred' and 'accursed').

As instances of modifications of the same root I may mention '*clamare*' ('to cry'), '*clam*' ('softly', 'quietly', 'secretly'); '*siccus*' ('dry'), '*succus*' ('juice'). And in German: '*Stimme*' ['voice'], '*stumm*' ['dumb'].

If we compare related languages, there are numerous examples. In English, 'to lock'; in German, '*Loch*' ['hole'] and '*Lucke*' ['gap']. In English, 'to cleave'; in German, '*kleben*' ['to stick'].

The English word 'without' (which is really 'with—without') is used to-day for 'without' alone. 'With', in addition to its combining sense, originally had a removing one; this is still to be seen in the compounds 'withdraw' and 'withhold'. Similarly with the German '*wieder*' ['together with' and '*wider*' 'against'].

[1] [Freud wrote a long review of Abel's monograph (1910*a*), from which much of what he says here is quoted in a condensed form. He returns to the subject in Lecture XV, p. 229 f. below.]

Another characteristic of the dream-work also has its counterpart in the development of language. In Ancient Egyptian, as well as in other, later languages, the order of the sounds in a word can be reversed, while keeping the same meaning. Examples of this in English and German are. '*Topf*' ['pot']—'pot'; 'boat' 'tub'; 'hurry' '*Ruhe*' ['rest']; '*Balken*' ['beam']—'*Kloben*' ['log'] and 'club'; 'wait'—'*täuwen*' ['tarry']. Similarly in Latin and German: '*capere*'—'*packen*' ['to seize']; '*ren*'—'*Niere*' ['kidney'].

Reversals like this, which occur here with individual words, take place in various ways in the dream-work. We already know reversal of meaning, replacement of something by its opposite [p. 178]. Besides this we find in dreams reversals of situation, of the relation between two people—a 'topsy-turvy' world. Quite often in dreams it is the hare that shoots the sportsman. Or again we find a reversal in the order of events, so that what precedes an event causally comes after it in the dream—like a theatrical production by a third-rate touring company, in which the hero falls down dead and the shot that killed him is not fired in the wings till afterwards. Or there are dreams where the whole order of the elements is reversed, so that to make sense in interpreting it we must take the last one first and the first one last. You will remember too from our study of dream-symbolism that going or falling into the water means the same as coming out of it—that is, giving birth or being born [p. 153], and that climbing up a staircase or a ladder is the same thing as coming down it [p. 158]. It is not hard to see the advantage that dream-distortion can derive from this freedom of representation.

These features of the dream-work may be described as *archaic*. They are equally characteristic of ancient systems of expression by speech and writing and they involve the same difficulties, which we shall have to discuss again later in a critical sense.[1]

And now a few more considerations. In the case of the dream-work it is clearly a matter of transforming the latent thoughts which are expressed in words into sensory images, mostly of a visual sort. Now our thoughts originally arose from sensory images of that kind: their first material and their preliminary

[1] [See Lecture XIII below.]

stages were sense impressions, or, more properly, mnemic images of such impressions. Only later were words attached to them and the words in turn linked up into thoughts. The dream-work thus submits thoughts to a *regressive* treatment[1] and undoes their development; and in the course of the regression everything has to be dropped that had been added as a new acquisition in the course of the development of the mnemic images into thoughts.

Such then, it seems, is the dream-work. As compared with the processes we have come to know in it, interest in the manifest dream must pale into insignificance. But I will devote a few more remarks to the latter, since it is of it alone that we have immediate knowledge.

It is natural that we should lose some of our interest in the manifest dream. It is bound to be a matter of indifference to us whether it is well put together, or is broken up into a series of disconnected separate pictures. Even if it has an apparently sensible exterior, we know that this has only come about through dream-distortion and can have as little organic relation to the internal content of the dream as the façade of an Italian church has to its structure and plan. There are other occasions when this façade of the dream *has* its meaning, and reproduces an important component of the latent dream-thoughts with little or no distortion. But we cannot know this before we have submitted the dream to interpretation and have been able to form a judgement from it as to the amount of distortion that has taken place. A similar doubt arises when two elements in a dream appear to have been brought into a close relation to each other. This may give us a valuable hint that we may bring together what corresponds to these elements in the latent dream as well; but on other occasions we can convince ourselves that what belongs together in the dream-thoughts has been torn apart in the dream.

In general one must avoid seeking to explain one part of the manifest dream by another, as though the dream had been coherently conceived and was a logically arranged narrative. On the contrary, it is as a rule like a piece of breccia, composed of various fragments of rock held together by a binding

[1] [The subject of 'regression' is discussed at length in Lecture XXII.]

medium, so that the designs that appear on it do not belong to the original rocks imbedded in it. And there is in fact one part of the dream-work, known as 'secondary revision',[1] whose business it is to make something whole and more or less coherent out of the first products of the dream-work. In the course of this, the material is arranged in what is often a completely misleading sense and, where it seems necessary, interpolations are made in it.

On the other hand, we must not over-estimate the dream-work and attribute too much to it. The achievements I have enumerated exhaust its activity; it can do no more than condense, displace, represent in plastic form and subject the whole to a secondary revision.[2] What appear in the dream as expressions of judgement, of criticism, of astonishment or of inference — none of these are achievements of the dream-work and they are very rarely expressions of afterthoughts about the dream, they are for the most part portions of the latent dream-thoughts which have passed over into the manifest dream with a greater or less amount of modification and adaptation to the context. Nor can the dream-work compose speeches. With a few assignable exceptions, speeches in dreams are copies and combinations of speeches which one has heard or spoken oneself on the day before the dream and which have been included in the latent thoughts either as material or as the instigator of the dream.[3] The dream-work is equally unable to carry out calculations. Such of them as appear in the manifest dream are mostly combinations of numbers, sham calculations which are quite senseless *quid* calculations and are once again only copies of calculations in the latent dream-thoughts.[4] In these circumstances it is not to be wondered at that the interest which had turned to the dream-work soon tends to move away from it to the latent dream-thoughts, which are revealed, distorted to a greater or less degree, by the manifest dream. But there is no justification for carrying this shift of interest so far that, in looking at the matter theoretically, one replaces the dream entirely

[1] [This is the subject of Section I of Chapter VI of *I. of D.*, **5**, 488 ff.]

[2] [Elsewhere Freud excluded secondary revision from the dream-work. Cf. 'An Evidential Dream' (1913*a*), *Standard Ed.*, **12**, 275 and n.]

[3] [Cf. *I. of D.*, **5**, 418 ff.]

[4] [Cf. *I. of D.*, **5**, 414 ff.]

by the latent dream-thoughts and makes some assertion about the former which only applies to the latter. It is strange that the findings of psycho-analysis could be misused to bring about this confusion. One cannot give the name of 'dream' to anything other than the product of the dream-work – that is to say, the *form* into which the latent thoughts have been transmuted by the dream-work. [Cf. p. 222 ff.]

The dream-work is a process of quite a singular kind, of which the like has not yet become known in mental life. Condensations, displacements, regressive transformations of thoughts into images—such things are novelties whose discovery has already richly rewarded the labours of psycho-analysis. And you can see once more, from the parallels to the dream-work, the connections which have been revealed between psycho-analytic studies and other fields – especially those concerned in the development of speech and thought.[1] You will only be able to form an idea of the further significance of these discoveries when you learn that the mechanism of dream-construction is the model of the manner in which neurotic symptoms arise.

I am also aware that we are not yet able to make a survey of the whole of the new acquisitions which these studies have brought to psychology. I will only point out the fresh proofs they have provided of the existence of unconscious mental acts – for this is what the latent dream-thoughts are—and what an unimaginably broad access to a knowledge of unconscious mental life we are promised by the interpretation of dreams.

But now the time has no doubt come for me to demonstrate to you from a variety of small examples of dreams what I have been preparing you for in the course of these remarks.

[1] [See also some remarks on the construction of jokes on p. 235 f. below.]

LECTURE XII

SOME ANALYSES OF SAMPLE DREAMS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—You must not be disappointed if I once again put before you fragments of dream-interpretations instead of inviting you to take part in the interpretation of a nice big dream. You will argue that after so many preparations you have a right to it, and you will express your conviction that after so many thousands of dreams have been successfully interpreted, it should have been possible long since to have brought together a collection of excellent sample dreams on which all our assertions about the dream-work and the dream-thoughts could be demonstrated. Just so. But the difficulties that stand in the way of the fulfilment of your wish are too many.

In the first place I must admit that no one carries on the interpretation of dreams as his main occupation. How does it come about, then, that people do interpret them? Occasionally, with no particular end in view, one may interest oneself in the dreams of an acquaintance, or one may work through one's own dreams for a time in order to train oneself in psycho-analytic work; but for the most part what one has to deal with are the dreams of neurotic patients who are under psycho-analytic treatment. These latter dreams are excellent material and are in no way inferior to those of healthy people; but the technique of the treatment necessitates our subordinating dream-interpretation to therapeutic aims, and we have to allow a whole number of dreams to drop after we have extracted something from them that is of service to the treatment.[1] Some dreams that occur during treatment entirely escape any full analysis: since they have arisen out of the great mass of psychical material which is still unknown to us, it is impossible to understand them before the treatment is finished. If I were to report dreams of this kind, it would oblige me to uncover all the

[1] [An account of the reasons for this is given in 'The Handling of Dream-Interpretation in Psycho-Analysis' (1911e), *Standard Ed.*, **12**, 91 ff.]

secrets of a neurosis as well; and that will not do for us, since it is precisely to prepare us for the study of the neuroses that we have attacked the problem of dreams.

You, however, would be glad to dispense with this material and would prefer to be given an explanation of the dreams of healthy people or of your own dreams. But this cannot be done, on account of their content. It is impossible to submit either oneself or anyone else whose confidence one enjoys to the ruthless exposure that would be involved in a detailed analysis of his dreams, which, as you already know, are concerned with the most intimate part of one's personality. But there is another difficulty in the way apart from that of providing the material. You are aware that dreams present an alien appearance to the dreamer himself, and much more so to anyone who is unacquainted with him personally. Our literature is not poor in good and detailed dream-analyses. I myself have published a few within the framework of case histories.[1] Perhaps the best example of the interpretation of a dream is the one reported by Otto Rank [1910*b*] consisting of two interrelated dreams dreamt by a young girl, which occupy about two pages of print but their analysis extends to seventy-six pages. So I should need something like a whole term to conduct you through a piece of work of the sort. If one takes up any comparatively long and much distorted dream, one has to give so many explanations of it, to bring up so much material in the way of associations and memories, to follow up so many by-paths, that a lecture about it would be quite confusing and unsatisfactory. I must therefore ask you to be content with what can be had more easily—an account of small pieces of the dreams of neurotic patients, in which it is possible to recognize this or that point in isolation. What is easiest to demonstrate are dream-symbols and, after them, some characteristics of the regressive representation in dreams. In the case of each of the dreams that follow, I will indicate why it is that I think it worth reporting.[2]

[1] [The main instances of these are the two dreams in the analysis of 'Dora' (1905*e*) and the childhood dream of the 'Wolf Man' (1918*b*). The latter case history was not actually published until after the delivery of this lecture, though it had already been written.]

[2] [Only two of the dreams quoted here (Nos. 6 and 7) are to be found elsewhere. Very large numbers of other examples, mainly of Freud's own dreams, are reported and analysed in *I. of D.*]

(1) This dream consisted only of two short pictures: *His uncle was smoking a cigarette although it was a Saturday.—A woman was caressing and fondling him* [the dreamer] *as though he were her child.*

In regard to the first picture the dreamer (a Jew) remarked that his uncle was a pious man who never had done and never could do anything sinful like that. In regard to the woman in the second picture nothing occurred to him except his mother. These two pictures or thoughts must obviously be seen in connection with each other. But how? Since he expressly disputed the reality of his uncle's action, it is plausible to insert an 'if': 'If my uncle, that pious man, were to smoke a cigarette on a Saturday, then I might let myself, too, be cuddled by my mother.' This clearly means that cuddling with his mother was something impermissible, like smoking on a Saturday to a pious Jew. You will recall that I told you [p. 177] that in the course of the dream-work all the relations between the dream-thoughts drop out; these are resolved into their raw material and it is the task of the interpretation to re-insert the omitted relations.

(2) As a result of my publications on dreams I have in a sense become a public consultant on matters relating to them, and for many years I have been receiving communications from the most various sources in which dreams are reported to me or submitted to my judgement. I am of course grateful to anyone who adds enough material to the dream to make an interpretation possible or who gives an interpretation himself. The following dream, dreamt by a medical student in Munich and dating from the year 1910, falls into this category. I am bringing it up in order to show you how impossible it is in general to understand a dream till the dreamer has given us his information about it. For I suspect that at bottom you consider that the ideal method of dream-interpretation is by filling in the meaning of the symbols and that you would like to discard the technique of obtaining associations to the dream; and I am anxious to disabuse you of this damaging mistake.

'July 13, 1910. Towards morning I had this dream: *I was bicycling down the street in Tübingen when a brown dachshund rushed up behind me and seized me by the heel. After a little I got off, sat down on a step, and began to hit at the beast, which had bitten firm hold of*

me. (I had no disagreeable feelings either from the bite or from the scene as a whole.) *Some elderly ladies were sitting opposite me and grinning at me. Then I woke up and, as has often happened before, at the moment of transition to waking, the whole dream was clear to me.*'

Symbols are of little help here. But the dreamer reported: 'I have recently fallen in love with a girl, but only from seeing her in the street, and I have had no means of getting in contact with her. The dachshund might have been the pleasantest way of doing so, especially as I am a great animal-lover and I liked this same characteristic in the girl.' He added that he had repeatedly intervened in furious dog-fights with great skill and often to the astonishment of the onlookers. We learn then that the girl he was attracted by was always to be seen in the company of this particular dog. As far as the manifest dream was concerned, however, the girl was omitted and only the dog associated with her was left. The elderly ladies who grinned at him may perhaps have taken the girl's place. His further remarks threw no adequate light on this point. The fact that he was bicycling in the dream is a direct repetition of the remembered situation. He never met the girl with the dog except when he was on his bicycle.

(3) When anyone has lost someone near and dear to him, he produces dreams of a special sort for some time afterwards, in which knowledge of the death arrives at the strangest compromises with the need to bring the dead person to life again. In some of these dreams the person who has died is dead and at the same time still alive, because he does not know he is dead, only if he did know would he die completely. In others, he is half dead and half alive, and each of these states is indicated in a particular way. We must not describe these dreams as simply nonsensical, for being brought to life again is no more inconceivable in dreams than it is, for instance, in fairy tales, in which it occurs as a very usual event. So far as I have been able to analyse such dreams, it has turned out that they are capable of a reasonable solution, but that the pious wish to bring the dead person back to life has been able to operate by the strangest means. I will now put before you a dream of this kind which sounds sufficiently queer and senseless and the analysis of which will show you much for which our theoretical

discussions will have prepared you. It is the dream of a man who had lost his father several years before:

His father was dead but had been exhumed and looked bad. He had been living since then and the dreamer was doing all he could to prevent him noticing it. (The dream then went on to other and apparently very remote matters.)

His father was dead; we know that. His having been exhumed did not correspond to reality; and there was no question of reality in anything that followed. But the dreamer reported that after he had come away from his father's funeral, one of his teeth began to ache. He wanted to treat the tooth according to the precept of Jewish doctrine: 'If thy tooth offend thee, pluck it out.' And he went off to the dentist. But the dentist said: 'One doesn't pluck out a tooth. One must have patience with it. I'll put something into it to kill it; come back in three days and I'll take it out.'

'That "take out",' said the dreamer suddenly, 'that's the exhuming!'

Was the dreamer right about this? It only fits more or less, not completely; for the *tooth* was not taken out, but only something in it that had died. But inaccuracies of this kind can, on the evidence of other experiences, well be attributed to the dream-work. If so, the dreamer had condensed his dead father and the tooth that had been killed but retained; he had fused them into a unity. No wonder, then, that something senseless emerged in the manifest dream, for, after all, not everything that was said about the tooth could fit his father. Where could there possibly be a *tertium comparationis* [p. 152 above] between the tooth and his father, to make the condensation possible?

But no doubt he must have been right, for he went on to say that he knew that if one dreams of a tooth falling out it means that one is going to lose a member of one's family.

This popular interpretation, as we know,[1] is incorrect or at least is correct only in a scarriloas sense. We shall be all the more surprised to find the topic thus touched upon re-appearing behind other portions of the dream's content.

The dreamer now began, without any further encouragement, to talk about his father's illness and death as well as

[1] [See pp. 156 f. and 164 f. above.]

about his own relations with him. His father was ill for a long time, and the nursing and treatment had cost him (the son) a lot of money. Yet it was never too much, he was never impatient, he never wished that after all it might soon come to an end. He was proud of his truly Jewish filial piety towards his father, of his strict obedience to Jewish Law. And here we are struck by a contradiction in the thoughts belonging to the dream. He had identified the tooth and his father. He wanted to proceed with the tooth in accordance with Jewish Law, which commanded him to pluck it out if it caused him pain or offence. He also wanted to proceed with his father, too, in accordance with the precepts of the Law, but in this case it commanded him to spare no expense or trouble, to take every burden on himself and to allow no hostile intention to emerge against the object that was causing him pain. Would not the two attitudes have agreed much more convincingly if he had really developed feelings towards his sick father similar to those towards his sick tooth—that is, if he had wished that an early death would put an end to his unnecessary, painful and costly existence?

I do not doubt that this was really his attitude towards his father during the tedious illness and that his boastful assurances of his filial piety were meant to distract him from these memories. Under such conditions the death-wish against a father is apt to become active and to hide itself under the mask of such sympathetic reflections as that 'it would be a happy release for him'. But please observe that here we have passed a barrier in the latent dream-thoughts themselves. No doubt the first portion of them was unconscious only temporarily—that is, during the construction of the dream, but his hostile impulses against his father must have been permanently unconscious.[1] They may have originated from scenes in his childhood and have occasionally slipped into consciousness, timidly and disguised, during his father's illness. We can assert this with greater certainty of other latent thoughts which have made unmistakable contributions to the content of the dream. Nothing, indeed, is to be discovered in the dream of his hostile impulses towards his father. But if we look for the roots of such hostility to a father in childhood, we shall recall that fear of a father is

[1] [This is carried further at the end of Lecture XIII, p. 212 below.]

set up because, in the very earliest years, he opposes a boy's sexual activities, just as he is bound to do once more from social motives after the age of puberty. This relation to his father applies to our dreamer as well: his love for him included a fair admixture of awe and anxiety, which had their source in his having been early deterred by threats from sexual activity.

The remaining phrases in the manifest dream can be explained now in relation to the masturbation complex. '*He looked bad*' is indeed an allusion to another remark of the dentist's to the effect that it looks bad if one has lost a tooth in that part of the mouth; but it relates at the same time to the 'looking bad' by which a young man at puberty betrays, or is afraid he betrays, his excessive sexual activity. It was not without relief to his own feelings that in the manifest content the dreamer displaced the 'looking bad' from himself on to his father—one of the kinds of reversal by the dream-work which is familiar to you [p. 180]. '*He had been living once then*' coincides with the wish to bring back to life as well as with the dentist's promise that the tooth would survive. The sentence 'the dreamer was doing all he could *to prevent him—his father, noticing it*' is very subtly devised to mislead us into thinking that it should be completed by the words 'that he was dead'. The only completion, however, that makes sense comes once more from the masturbation complex; in that connection it is self-evident that the young man did all he could to conceal his sexual life from his father. And finally, remember that we must always interpret what are called 'dreams with a dental stimulus' as relating to masturbation and the dreaded punishment for it. [Cf. footnote, p. 188.]

You can see now how this incomprehensible dream came about. It was done by producing a strange and misleading condensation, by disregarding all the thoughts that were in the centre of the latent thought-process and by creating ambiguous substitutes for the deepest and chronologically most remote of those thoughts.[1]

(4) We have already tried repeatedly to come to understand

[1] [A fragment of a dream very similar to, if not identical with, this one is discussed in *I. of D.*, 5, 430–1, as well as in 'Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning' (1911*b*), *Standard Ed.*, **12**, 225–6.]

the matter-of-fact and commonplace dreams which have nothing senseless or strange about them but which raise the question of why one should dream about such indifferent stuff. [Cf. pp. 96–7 and 117.] I will therefore offer you another example of this kind—three interconnected dreams dreamt by a young lady in one night.

(*a*) *She was walking across the hall of her house and struck her head against a low-hanging chandelier and drew blood.*

No reminiscence, nothing that had really happened. The information she produced in response to it led in quite other directions. 'You know how badly my hair's falling out. "My child," my mother said to me yesterday, "if this goes any further you'll have a head as smooth as a bottom." ' So here the head stands for the other end of the body. We can understand the chandelier, without any help, as a symbol: all objects capable of being lengthened are symbols of the male organ [p. 155]. It was therefore a matter of bleeding at the lower end of the body, which had arisen from contact with a penis. This might still be ambiguous. Her further associations showed that what was in question concerned a belief that menstrual bleeding arises from sexual intercourse with a man—a piece of sexual theory which counts many faithful believers among immature girls.

(*b*) *She saw a deep pit in the vineyard, which she knew had been caused by a tree being torn out.* She added a remark that the tree *was missing*. She meant that she had not seen the tree in her dream; but the same wording served to express another thought which made the symbolic interpretation quite certain. The dream referred to another piece of infantile sexual theory—to the belief that girls originally had the same genitals as boys and that their later shape was the result of castration (the tearing out of a tree).

(*c*) *She was standing in front of the drawer of her writing-table which she was so familiar with that she could tell at once if anyone had been into it.* Like all drawers, chests and cases, the writing-table drawer stood for the female genitals [p. 156]. She knew that indications of sexual intercourse (and, as she thought, of touching) could be observed on the genitals and had long feared such a discovery. In all these three dreams, I think, the accent is to be placed on *knowledge*. She was recalling the period of her

sexual researches when she was a child, of whose outcome she had been quite proud at the time.[1]

(5) Here is a little more symbolism. But this time I must start with a short preamble on the psychical situation. A gentleman who had passed a night in intercourse with a lady described her as one of those motherly characters in whom the wish for a child breaks irresistibly through in intercourse with a man. The circumstances of this meeting, however, called for a precaution which prevented the fertilizing semen from reaching the woman's uterus. On waking up after this night the woman reported the following dream:

An officer in a red cap was running after her in the street. She fled from him, and ran up the stairs with him still after her. Breathless, she reached her flat, slammed the door behind her and locked it. He stayed outside, and when she looked through the peep-hole, he was sitting on a bench outside and weeping.

You will no doubt recognize the pursuit by the officer in the red cap and the breathless climbing upstairs as representing the sexual act [p. 158]. The fact that it was the dreamer who locked herself up against her pursuer will serve as an example of the reversals that are used so commonly in dreams [p. 180], for it was the man who had avoided the consummation of the sexual act. In the same way, her grief was displaced on to the man, for it was he who wept in the dream—and this was simultaneously a representation of the emission of semen.

I feel sure that you have heard some time or other that it is asserted by psycho-analysis that every dream has a sexual meaning. Well, you yourselves are in a position to form a judgement of the incorrectness of this reproach. You have become acquainted with wishful dreams dealing with the satisfaction of the most obvious needs—hunger and thirst and the longing for freedom—with dreams of convenience and of impatience, and also with purely covetous and egoistic dreams. But at the same time you should bear in mind, as one of the results of psychoanalytic research, that greatly distorted dreams give expression mainly (though, again, not exclusively) to sexual wishes.

[1] [The sexual researches and sexual theories of children are discussed in Lecture XX (p. 317 below).]

(6) I have a particular reason for piling up instances of the use of symbols in dreams. At our first meeting [p. 16 ff.] I lamented the difficulty of providing demonstrations and so of carrying conviction in giving instruction in psycho-analysis. And I have no doubt that you have since come to agree with me. But the different theses of psycho-analysis are so intimately connected that conviction can easily be carried over from a single point to a larger part of the whole. It might be said of psycho-analysis that if anyone holds out a little finger to it it quickly grasps his whole hand. No one, even, who has accepted the explanation of parapraxes can logically withhold his belief in all the rest. A second, equally accessible position is offered by dream-symbolism. Here is the dream of an uneducated woman whose husband was a policeman and who had certainly never heard anything about dream-symbolism or psycho-analysis. Then judge for yourselves whether its explanation by the help of sexual symbols can be called arbitrary and forced:

'. . . *Then someone broke into the house and she was frightened and called out for a policeman. But he had gone into a church, to which a number of steps led up, accompanied amicably by two tramps. Behind the church there was a hill and above it a thick wood. The policeman was dressed in a helmet, gorget and cloak. He had a brown beard. The two tramps, who went along peaceably with the policeman, had sack-like aprons tied round their middles. In front of the church a path led up to the hill on both sides of it there grew grass and brushwood, which became thicker and thicker and, at the top of the hill, turned into a regular wood.*' [1]

You will have no trouble in recognizing the symbols used. The male genitals are represented by a triad of figures, and the female ones by a landscape with a chapel, hill and wood. Once again you find steps as a symbol for the sexual act. What is called a hill in the dream is also called one in anatomy the Mons Veneris [the hill of Venus].

(7) And here is yet another dream that must be solved by the insertion of symbols. It is notable and convincing from the fact that the dreamer himself translated all the symbols, though he had no sort of previous theoretical knowledge of

[1] [This dream, originally reported by B. Dattner, appears in *I. of D.*, 5, 366, in a very slightly different version.]

dream-interpretation. Such an attitude is quite unusual and its determinants are not precisely understood.[1]

'*He was going for a walk with his father in a place which must certainly have been the Prater,*[2] *since he saw the Rotunda, with a small annex in front of it to which a captive balloon was attached, though it looked rather limp. His father asked him what all this was for; he was surprised at his asking, but explained it to him. Then they came into a courtyard which had a large sheet of tin laid out in it. His father wanted to pull off a large piece of it, but first looked around to see if anyone was watching. He told him that he need only tell the foreman and he could take some without any bother. A staircase led down from this yard into a shaft, whose walls were cushioned in some soft material, rather like a leather armchair. At the end of the shaft was a longish platform and then another shaft started. . . .*'

The dreamer himself interpreted: 'The Rotunda was my genitals and the captive balloon in front of it was my penis, whose limpness I have reason to complain of.' Going into greater detail, then, we may translate the Rotunda as the bottom (habitually regarded by children as part of the genitals) and the small annex in front of it as the scrotum. His father asked him in the dream what all this was—that is, what was the purpose and function of the genitals. It seemed plausible to reverse this situation and turn the dreamer into the questioner. Since he had in fact never questioned his father in this way, we had to look upon the dream-thought as a wish, or take it as a conditional clause, such as: 'If I had asked my father for sexual enlightenment. . . .' We shall presently find the continuation of this thought in another part of the dream.

The courtyard in which the sheet of tin was spread out is not to be taken symbolically in the first instance. It was derived from the business premises of the dreamer's father. For reasons of discretion I have substituted 'tin' for another material in which his father actually dealt: but I have made no other change in the wording of the dream. The dreamer had entered his father's business and had taken violent objection to the somewhat dubious practices on which the firm's earnings in part depended. Consequently the dream-thought I have just interpreted may have continued in this way: ' If I had asked

[1] [Cf. some remarks on this in *I. of D.*, 5, 351.]

[2] [The 'Bois de Boulogne' of Vienna. It includes an amusement park.]

him), he would have deceived me just as he deceives his customers.' As regards the 'pulling off' which served to represent his father's dishonesty in business, the dreamer himself produced a second explanation—namely that it stood for masturbating. Not only have we long been familiar with this interpretation [p. 164], but there was something to confirm it in the fact that the secret nature of masturbation was represented by its reverse: it might be done openly. Just as we should expect, the masturbatory activity was once again displaced on to the dreamer's father, like the questioning in the first scene of the dream. He promptly interpreted the shaft as a vagina, having regard to the soft cushioning of its walls. I added on my own authority [p. 158] that climbing down, like climbing up in other cases, described sexual intercourse in the vagina.

The dreamer himself gave a biographical explanation of the further details -that the first shaft was followed by a longish platform and then by another shaft. He had practised intercourse for a time but had then given it up on account of inhibitions, and he now hoped to be able to resume it by the help of the treatment.[1]

(8) The two following dreams were dreamt by a foreigner of a highly polygamous disposition. I repeat them to you as evidence for my assertion [p. 142] that the dreamer's own ego appears in every dream even if it is concealed in the manifest content. The trunks in the dreams were symbols of women:

(*a*) *He was starting on a journey; his luggage was taken to the station on a carriage, a number of trunks piled up on it, and among them two big black ones, like boxes of samples. He said to someone consolingly: 'Well, they're only going with me as far as the station.'*

He did in fact travel with a great deal of luggage; but he also brought a great many stories about women into the treatment. The two black trunks corresponded to two dark[2] women who were at the time playing the main part in his life. One of them had wanted to follow him to Vienna, and on my advice he had telegraphed to put her off.

(*b*) A scene at the customs-house: *Another traveller opened his*

[1] [This dream and its analysis are reprinted almost exactly from *I of D.*, **5**, 364–5.]

[2] [In German '*schwarz*' ('black').]

box and, coolly smoking a cigarette, said: 'There's nothing in it.' The customs officer seemed to believe him, but felt about once more inside it, and found something quite particularly prohibited. The traveller said in a resigned voice: 'There's nothing to be done about it.'

He himself was the traveller: I was the customs officer. As a rule he was very straightforward in making admissions; but he had intended to keep silent to me about a new connection he had formed with a lady, because he rightly supposed that she was not unknown to me. He displaced the distressing situation of being detected on to a stranger, so that he himself did not seem to appear in the dream.

(9) Here is an example of a symbol which I have not yet mentioned:

He met his sister in the company of two women friends who were themselves sisters. He shook hands with both of them but not with his sister.

No connection with any real occurrence. But his thoughts took him back, rather, to a period in which his observations led him to reflect on how late girls' breasts developed. So the two sisters were breasts; he would have liked to take hold of them with his hand—if only it were not his sister.

(10) Here is an example of death-symbolism in a dream:

He was walking, with two people whose names he knew but had forgotten when he woke up, across a very high, steep iron bridge. Suddenly they had both gone, and he saw a ghost-like man in a cap and linen clothes. He asked him if he was the telegraph-boy. No. Was he the driver? No. Then he walked on further. . . . While he was still dreaming he felt acute anxiety, and after he had woken up he continued the dream with a phantasy that the iron bridge suddenly broke and he fell into the abyss.

People of whom one insists that they are unknown or that one has forgotten their names are mostly people very near to one. The dreamer had a brother and sister; and if he had wished that these two were dead, it would be only fair that in return *he* should be victimized by a fear of death. Of the telegraph-boy he remarked that such people always bring bad news. By his uniform he might equally have been the lamp lighter, but he puts out the lamps as well, just as the Spirit of Death puts

out the torch. The driver made him think of Uhland's poem about King Charles's Voyage, and reminded him of a dangerous sea-voyage with two companions during which he had played the part of the King in the poem.[1] The iron bridge made him think of a recent accident and of the foolish saying: 'Life is a suspension bridge.'[2]

(11) The following dream may count as another representation of death:

An unknown gentleman left a black-edged visiting-card on him.

(12) You will be interested in the following dream in a number of ways, though a neurotic state in the dreamer was one of its preconditions:

He was travelling in a railway-train. The train came to a stop in open country. He thought there was going to be an accident and that he must think of getting away. He went through all the coaches in the train and killed everyone he met — the guard, the engine-driver, and so on.

In connection with this he thought of a story told him by a friend. A lunatic was being conveyed in a compartment on an Italian line, but through carelessness a traveller was allowed in with him. The madman killed the other traveller. Thus he was identifying himself with the madman, and based his right to do so on an obsession by which he was tormented from time to time that he must 'get rid of all accessory witnesses'. But then he himself found a better reason, and this led to the precipitating cause of the dream. At the theatre the night before he had once more seen the girl whom he had wanted to marry but had withdrawn from because she had given him ground for being jealous. In view of the intensity reached by his jealousy he would, he thought, really be mad to want to marry her. This meant that he regarded her as so untrustworthy that, in his jealousy, he would have to kill everyone who came his way. We have already come across walking through a series of rooms

[1] [In Uhland's poem, 'Konig Karls Meerfahrt' King Charles and his twelve knights are overtaken by a storm on a voyage to the Holy Land. The twelve knights express their uneasiness in turn — but the King sits silently at the helm and steers the ship to safety.]

[2] [This is quoted as an example of a bad joke in a footnote added in 1912 to Freud's book on jokes (1905*c*, *Standard Ed.*, **8**, 139).]

(here, railway coaches) as a symbol of marriage (a reversal of 'monogamy').[1]

In connection with the train coming to a stop in open country and his being afraid of an accident, he said that once when he was on a railway journey there had been a sudden stop of this kind when they were not in a station. A young lady who was travelling with him had said that there might be going to be a collision and that the safest thing to do was to lift one's legs up high. But this 'lifting the legs high' had also played a part in the many walks and excursions in the country which he had taken with the other girl in the happy early days of their love. This was a fresh argument for thinking he would be mad to marry her now. But my knowledge of the situation made me feel certain that he nevertheless wished he were mad enough to do it.

[1] [This symbol had not been mentioned earlier in these lectures. But in *I. of D.*, 5, 354, it is stated that a suite of rooms can stand for a brothel or a harem, or alternatively (by reversal) for a monogamous marriage.]

LECTURE XIII

THE ARCHAIC FEATURES AND INFANTILISM OF DREAMS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, Let us start out once more from the conclusions we arrived at that the dream-work under the influence of the dream-censorship, transposes the latent dream-thoughts into a different mode of expression. The latent thoughts do not differ from our familiar conscious thoughts of waking life. The new mode of expression is incomprehensible to us owing to many of its features. We have said that it harks back to states of our intellectual development which have long since been superseded – to picture-language, to symbolic connections, to conditions, perhaps, which existed before our thought-language had developed. We have on that account described the mode of expression of the dream-work as *archaic* or *regressive* [p. 180 f.].

You may conclude from this that if we study the dream-work further we must succeed in gaining valuable light on the little-known beginnings of our intellectual development. I hope it will be so; but this work has not so far been started upon. The prehistory into which the dream-work leads us back is of two kinds: on the one hand, into the individual's prehistory, his childhood, and on the other, in so far as each individual somehow recapitulates in an abbreviated form the entire development of the human race, into phylogenetic prehistory too. Shall we succeed in distinguishing which portion of the latent mental processes is derived from the individual prehistoric period and which portion from the phylogenetic one? It is not, I believe, impossible that we shall. It seems to me, for instance, that symbolic connections, which the individual has never acquired by learning, may justly claim to be regarded as a phylogenetic heritage.

This, however, is not the only archaic characteristic of dreams. You are all familiar, of course, from your own experience, with the remarkable amnesia of childhood. I mean the fact that the earliest years of life, up to the age of five, six

or eight, have not left behind them traces in our memory like later experiences. Here and there, it is true, we come upon people who can boast of a continuous memory from the first beginnings to the present day; but the other alternative, of gaps in the memory, is by far the more frequent. There has not, in my opinion, been enough astonishment over this fact. By the time a child is two he can speak well, and soon shows that he is at home in complicated mental situations; and he makes remarks which, if they are reported to him many years later, he himself will have forgotten. Moreover, the memory is more efficient at an early age, since it is less overburdened than it is later. Nor is there any reason for regarding the function of memory as a particularly high or difficult mental activity; on the contrary, we can find a good memory in people of very low intellectual standing.[1]

A second remarkable fact to which I must draw your attention, and which comes on top of the first one, is that out of the void of memories that covers the earliest years of childhood there stand out a few well-preserved recollections, mostly perceived in plastic form, which cannot justify their survival. Our memory deals with the material of the impressions which impinge on us in later life by making a selection among them. It retains what is of any importance and drops what is unimportant. But this is not true of the childhood memories that have been retained. They do not necessarily correspond to the important experiences of childhood years, nor even to those which must have seemed important from the child's point of view. They are often so commonplace and insignificant that we can only ask ourselves in astonishment why this particular detail has escaped oblivion. I attempted long ago, with the help of analysis, to attack the enigma of childhood amnesia and of the residual memories which interrupt it, and I arrived at the conclusion that even in the case of children it is true in spite of everything that only what is important remains in the memory. But through the processes, already familiar to you, of condensation and more especially of displacement, what is important is replaced in memory by something else which appears unimportant. For this reason I have called these childhood memories

[1] [A longer discussion of infantile amnesia will be found in the second of the *Three Essays* (1905), *Standard Ed.*, 7, 174 ff.]

'screen memories', and with a thorough analysis everything that has been forgotten can be extracted from them.[1]

In psycho-analytic treatments we are invariably faced by the task of filling up these gaps in the memory of childhood; and in so far as the treatment is to any extent successful—that is to say, extremely frequently—we also succeed in bringing to light the content of these forgotten years of childhood. Those impressions had never been really forgotten, they were only inaccessible, latent, and had formed part of the unconscious. But it can come about that they emerge from the unconscious spontaneously, and this happens in connection with dreams. It appears that dream-life knows how to find access to these latent, infantile experiences. Excellent examples of this have been reported in the literature and I myself have been able to provide a contribution of the kind. I once dreamt in a certain connection of a person who must have done me a service and whom I saw clearly before me. He was a one-eyed man of small stature, stout, and with his head sunk deep in his shoulders. I concluded from the context that he was a doctor. Luckily I was able to enquire from my mother, who was still alive, what the doctor at my birth-place (which I had left when I was three) had looked like, and I learnt from her that he was one-eyed, short, stout and with his head sunk deep in his shoulders, and I also learnt what the accident was for which he had come to my help and which I myself had forgotten.[2] This fact of dreams having at their disposal the forgotten material of the first years of childhood is thus a further archaic feature.[3]

This same piece of information can be further applied to another of the riddles we have come up against. You recall the amazement which was caused by our discovery that what instigates dreams are actively evil and extravagantly sexual wishes, which have made the censorship and distortion of dreams necessary [p. 142 ff.]. When we have interpreted a

[1] [Screen memories had been discussed by Freud in Chapter IV of *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901*b*), *Standard Ed.*, 6, 43 ff., as well as in a separate paper on the subject published earlier (1899*a*).]

[2] [The dream is described in *Int. of D.*, 4, 17, where further references will be found. The accident itself is described ibid., 5, 560.]

[3] [This fact had been noted by Freud in a letter to Fliess of March 10, 1898 (Freud, 1950*a*, Letter 84.)]

dream of this sort to the dreamer and if, to take the most favourable case, he does not actually attack the interpretation, he nevertheless regularly raises the question of where these wishes come from, since they feel alien to him and their opposite is what he is conscious of. We need have no hesitation in pointing out their origin. These evil wishful impulses arise from the past, and often from a past that is not very remote. It can be shown that there was a time when they were familiar and conscious, even if they are no longer so to-day. A woman, whose dream meant that she would like to see her daughter, now seventeen years old, dead before her eyes,[1] found under our guidance that she had indeed at one time harboured this death-wish. The child was the fruit of an unhappy marriage which was soon dissolved. Once, while she still bore her daughter in her womb, in a fit of rage after a violent scene with her husband she had beaten with her fists on her body in order to kill the child inside it. How many mothers, who love their children tenderly, perhaps over-tenderly, to-day, conceived them unwillingly and wished at that time that the living thing within them might not develop further! They may even have expressed that wish in various, fortunately harmless, actions. Thus their death-wish against someone they love, which is later so mysterious, originates from the earliest days of their relationship to that person.

In the same way, a father had a dream which justified the interpretation that he wished for the death of his favourite eldest child. He too was led to remember that there had been a time when this wish was not strange to him. When the child was still an infant in arms, the father, discontented with his choice of a wife, often thought that if the little creature, who meant nothing to him, were to die, he would be free once more and would make better use of his freedom.[2] The same origin can be shown in the case of a great number of similar impulses

[1] [This dream is described at greater length in *Int. to P.*, **4**, 154–5 and referred to again ibid., 249. In these passages the girl's age is given three times in letters as 'fifteen'. The '17' in the text in all the German editions of the present work is perhaps due to a misprint.]

[2] [What appears to be the same story as this is told in much greater detail in connection not with a dream but with a 'dangerous wish' near the end of Chapter VIII of *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, *Standard Ed.*, **6**, 187–9.]

of hatred; they are recollections of something belonging to the past, which was once conscious and played its part in mental life. You will be inclined to conclude from this that such wishes and such dreams ought not to arise in cases where transformations of this kind in one's relation to someone never occurred, where the relation was of the same kind from the first. I am prepared to admit this; but I must remind you that what you must take into consideration is not the *wording* of the dream but its sense after it has been interpreted. It is possible that a manifest dream of the death of someone loved has merely assumed a horrifying mask and may mean something quite different, or that the loved person is intended as a misleading substitute for someone else.

But the same subject will suggest another and far more serious question. 'Even if,' you will say, 'this death-wish was present at one time and is confirmed by recollection, that is still no explanation. After all, it was superseded long ago, and can only be present to-day in the unconscious as no more than an unemotional memory, not as a powerful impulse. Nothing speaks in favour of this last possibility. Why, then, was it recollected at all in the dream?' This question may justly be raised. An attempt to answer it would lead us too far and would necessitate our taking up a position on one of the most important points in the theory of dreams. But I am obliged to keep within the framework of our discussions and to exercise restraint. So prepare yourselves for a provisional renunciation.[1] Let us content ourselves with the factual evidence that this superseded wish can be shown to be the instigator of the dream, and let us pursue our enquiry whether other evil wishes can be similarly traced back to the past.

We will keep to wishes for getting rid of someone, which may for the most part be attributed to the dreamer's unrestricted egoism. A wish of this kind can very often be pointed to as the constructor of a dream. Whenever anyone in the course of one's life gets in one's way — and how often this must happen in view of the complication of one's relationships in life! — a dream is promptly ready to kill that person, even if it be father or

[1] [Freud returns to this problem at the end of the present lecture (p. 212).]

mother, brother or sister, husband or wife. This wickedness of human nature came as a great surprise to us and we were decidedly disinclined to accept this outcome of dream-interpretation without question. But as soon as we were led to look for the origin of these wishes in the past, we discovered the period of the individual's past in which there was no longer anything strange in such egoism and such wishful impulses, directed even against his closest relatives. It is children, and precisely in those earliest years which are later veiled by amnesia, who often exhibit this egoism to an extremely marked degree and who invariably show clear rudiments or, more correctly speaking, residues of it. Children love themselves first, and it is only later that they learn to love others and to sacrifice something of their own ego to others. Even those people whom a child seems to love from the beginning are loved by him at first because he needs them and cannot do without them—once again from egoistic motives. Not until later does the impulse to love make itself independent of egoism. It is literally true that *his egoism has taught him to love.*

In this connection it will be interesting to compare the child's attitude to his brothers and sisters with that towards his parents. A small child does not necessarily love his brothers and sisters; often he obviously does not. There is no doubt that he hates them as his competitors, and it is a familiar fact that this attitude often persists for long years, till maturity is reached or even later, without interruption. Quite often, it is true, it is succeeded, or let us rather say overlaid, by a more affectionate attitude; but the hostile one seems very generally to be the earlier. This hostile attitude can be observed most easily in children between two and a half and four or five, when a new baby brother or sister appears. It usually meets with a very unfriendly reception. Such remarks as 'I don't like him, the stork can take him away again' are quite common. After this, every opportunity is taken of disparaging the newcomer and attempts to injure him and even murderous assaults are not unknown. If the difference in age is less, by the time the child's mental activity has awakened to some degree of intensity he finds his competitor already there and adapts himself to him. If the difference is greater, the new baby may from the first arouse a certain sympathy as an interesting object, a sort of live doll;

and where the difference in age is of eight or more years, solicitous, maternal impulses may already come into play, especially in girls. But, honestly speaking, if one comes upon a wish for the death of a brother or sister behind a dream, there is seldom need to find it puzzling and one can trace its prototype without any trouble in early childhood and often enough in later years of companionship as well.[1]

There is probably no nursery without violent conflicts between its inmates. The motives for these are rivalry for parental love, for common possessions, for living space. The hostile impulses are directed against older as well as against younger members of the family. It was, I believe, Bernard Shaw who remarked: 'As a rule there is only one person an English girl hates more than she hates her mother; and thats her eldest sister.' [2] But there is something in this remark that strikes us as strange. We might at a pinch find hatred and competition with brothers and sisters intelligible. But how can we suppose that feelings of hatred can make their way into the relation between daughter and mother, between parents and children?

This relation is undoubtedly a more favourable one, from the children's point of view as well. That is what our expectations demand, we find an absence of love far more repellent between parents and children than between brothers and sisters. In the former case we have, as it were, made something sacred which in the latter we have left profane. Yet daily observation can show us how frequently the emotional relation between parents and their grown-up children fall behind the ideal set up by society, how much hostility is ready to hand and would be expressed if it were not held back by admixtures of filial piety and affectionate impulses. The motives for this hostility are generally known and their tendency is to divide those of the same sex—the daughter from the mother and the father from the son. The daughter finds in her mother the authority which restricts her will and which is entrusted with the task of imposing on her the renunciation of sexual freedom which society demands; in a few instances she even finds in her a competitor who struggles against being supplanted. The same thing is

[1] [The relations between brothers and sisters are discussed with examples in Section D of Chapter V of *I. of D.*, 4, 250–5.]

[2] [John Tanner in *Man and Superman*, Act II.]

repeated between the son and his father still more glaringly. In the son's eyes his father embodies every unwillingly tolerated social restraint, his father prevents him from exercising his will, from early sexual pleasure and, where there is common property in the family, from enjoying it. In the case of an heir to the throne this waiting for a father's death reaches an almost tragic height. There seems less danger to the relation between father and daughter or mother and son. This last provides the purest examples of an unchangeable affection, unimpaired by any egoistic considerations.[1]

Why am I speaking of these things, which are after all commonplaces and universally known? Because there is an unmistakable inclination to disavow their importance in life and to make out that the ideal demanded by society is fulfilled far more often than it really is. It is better, however, that the truth should be told by psychologists rather than that the task should be left to cynics. And, incidentally, this disavowal applies only to real life. Narrative and dramatic works of the imagination may freely make play with the themes that arise from a disturbance of this ideal.

There is no need to feel surprised, therefore, if, in a large number of people, dreams disclose their wish to get rid of their parents and especially of the parent of their own sex. We may assume that this wish is also present in waking life and is even conscious sometimes, if it can be masked by some other motive, as was the case with our dreamer in Example 3 [p. 189 above], where it was replaced by pity for his father's useless sufferings. It is rarely that the hostility alone dominates the relationship; far oftener it is in the background of more affectionate impulses by which it is suppressed, and it must wait until a dream isolates it, as it were. What seems to us of enormous size in a dream, on account of this isolation, shrinks up once more when our interpretation has given it its place in the context of real life. Hanns Sachs ,[2] But we come upon this dream-wish, too,

[1] [This point is discussed at greater length in Lecture XXXIII of the *New Introductory Lectures* (1933a), *Standard Ed.*, **22**, 133.]

[2] [The actual words used by Sachs (1912, 50) were quoted by Freud in a passage which he inserted in 1914 on almost the last page of *I. of D.* (5, 620–1).]

where it has no relevance in real life, and where the adult need never confess to it in his waking life. The reason for this is that the deepest and most invariable motive for estrangement, especially between two people of the same sex, has already made itself felt in early childhood.

What I have in mind is rivalry in love, with a clear emphasis on the subject's sex. While he is still a small child, a son will already begin to develop a special affection for his mother, whom he regards as belonging to him; he begins to feel his father as a rival who disputes his sole possession. And in the same way a little girl looks on her mother as a person who interferes with her affectionate relation to her father and who occupies a position which she herself could very well fill. Observation shows us to what early years these attitudes go back. We refer to them as the 'Oedipus complex', because the legend of Oedipus realizes, with only a slight softening, the two extreme wishes that arise from the son's situation — to kill his father and take his mother to wife. I do not wish to assert that the Oedipus complex exhausts the relation of children to their parents: it can easily be far more complicated. The Oedipus complex can, moreover, be developed to a greater or less strength, it can even be reversed; but it is a regular and very important factor in a child's mental life, and there is more danger of our underestimating rather than over-estimating its influence and that of the developments which proceed from it. Incidentally, children often react in their Oedipus attitude to a stimulus coming from their parents, who are frequently led in their preferences by difference of sex, so that the father will choose his daughter and the mother her son as a favourite, or, in case of a cooling-off in the marriage, as a substitute for a love-object that has lost its value.[1]

It cannot be said that the world has shown much gratitude to psycho-analytic research for its revelation of the Oedipus complex. On the contrary, the discovery has provoked the most violent opposition among adults; and those who had neglected to take part in the repudiation of this proscribed and tabooed emotional relationship made up for their fault later by depriving the complex of its value through twisted re-interpreta-

[1] [Freud discusses the Oedipus complex at much greater length in Lecture XXI (p. 329 ff. below)]

tions.[1] It is my unaltered conviction that there is nothing in this to be disavowed or glossed over. We must reconcile ourselves to the fact which was recognized by the Greek legend itself as an inevitable fate. It is once again an interesting fact that the Oedipus complex, which has been rejected from real life, has been left to imaginative writing, has been placed freely, as it were, at its disposal. Otto Rank [1912*b*] has shown in a careful study how the Oedipus complex has provided dramatic authors with a wealth of themes in endless modifications, softenings and disguises—in distortions, that is to say, of the kind which we are already familiar with as the work of a censorship. We may therefore also ascribe this Oedipus complex to dreamers who have been fortunate enough to escape conflicts with their parents in later life. And, intimately linked with it, we find what we call the 'castration complex',[2] the reaction to the threats against the child aimed at putting a stop to his early sexual activities and attributed to his father.

What we have already learnt from our study of the mental life of children will lead us to expect to find a similar explanation of the other group of forbidden dream-wishes—the excessive sexual impulses. We are thus encouraged to make a study of the development of children's sexual life and from many sources we arrive at what follows.

First and foremost, it is an untenable error to deny that children have a sexual life and to suppose that sexuality only begins at puberty with the maturation of the genitals. On the contrary, from the very first children have a copious sexual life, which differs at many points from what is later regarded as normal. What in adult life is described as 'perverse' differs from the normal in these respects, first, by disregarding the barrier of species (the gulf between men and animals), secondly, by overstepping the barrier against disgust, thirdly that against incest (the prohibition against seeking sexual satisfaction from near blood-relations), fourthly that against members of one's own sex and fifthly the transferring of the part played by the genitals to other organs and areas of the body. None of these

[1] [This is of course an allusion to the secession of Adler and Jung. Cf. footnote, p. 346 below.]

[2] [This is further explained in Lecture XX, p. 317 f. below.]

barriers existed from the beginning; they were only gradually erected in the course of development and education. Small children are free from them. They recognize no frightful gulf between human beings and animals; the arrogance with which men separate themselves from animals does not emerge until later.[1] To begin with, children exhibit no disgust at excreta but acquire this slowly under the pressure of education; they attach no special importance to the distinction between the sexes, but attribute the same conformation of the genitals to both; they direct their first sexual lusts and their curiosity to those who are nearest and for other reasons dearest to them—parents, brothers and sisters, or nurses; and finally, they show (what later on breaks through once again at the climax of a love-relation) that they expect to derive pleasure not only from their sexual organs, but that many other parts of the body lay claim to the same sensitivity, afford them analogous feelings of pleasure and can accordingly play the part of genitals. Children may thus be described as 'polymorphously perverse', and if these impulses only show *traces* of activity, that is because on the one hand they are of less intensity compared with those in later life and on the other hand all a child's sexual manifestations are at once energetically suppressed by education. This suppression is, as it were, extended into theory; for adults endeavour to overlook one portion of the sexual manifestations of children and to disguise another portion by misinterpreting its sexual nature, so that they can then disavow the whole of them. It is often the very same people who in the nursery are furious with any sexual naughtinesses of children and afterwards at their writing-tables defend the sexual purity of the same children. When children are left to themselves, or under the influence of seduction, they often bring about quite considerable achievements in the way of perverse sexual activity. Adults are of course right not to take this too seriously and to regard it as 'childishness', or 'playfulness', for children are not to be condemned as fully capable or fully responsible either before the judgement-seat of morals or before the law; but nonetheless these things exist. They have their importance both as indications of a child's innate constitution and as causes and encouragements of later developments

[1] [Freud enlarged on this in a contemporary paper, 'A Difficulty in the Path of Psycho-Analysis' (1917*a*), *Standard Ed.*, 17, 140.]

in him; they give us information on the sexual life of children and so on human sexual life in general. If, therefore, we once more find all these perverse wishful impulses behind our distorted dreams, that only means that in this field too dreams have taken a step backwards into the state of infancy.

Among these forbidden wishes special emphasis deserves to be further laid on the incestuous ones—that is, on those aiming at sexual intercourse with parents and brothers and sisters. You know what horror is felt, or at least professed, in human society at such intercourse, and what stress is laid on the prohibitions directed against it. Tremendous efforts have been made to explain this horror of incest. Some people have supposed that breeding considerations on the part of Nature have found psychical representation in this prohibition, since inbreeding would impair racial characters. Others have maintained that, as a result of living together from early childhood onwards, sexual desire has been diverted from the people in question. In both these cases, it may be remarked, an avoidance of incest would be secured automatically, and it would not be clear why such severe prohibitions were called for, which would point rather to the presence of a strong desire for it. Psycho-analytic researches have shown unmistakably that the choice of an incestuous love-object is, on the contrary, the first and invariable one, and that it is not until later that resistance to it sets in; it is no doubt impossible to trace back this resistance to *individual* psychology.[1]

Let us now bring together what our researches into child-psychology have contributed to our understanding of dreams. We have not only found that the material of the forgotten experiences of childhood is accessible to dreams, but we have also seen that the mental life of children with all its characteristics, its egoism, its incestuous choice of love-objects, and so on, still persists in dreams—that is, in the unconscious, and that dreams carry us back every night to this infantile level. The fact is thus confirmed that *what is unconscious in mental life is also what is infantile*. The strange impression of there being so much evil in people begins to diminish. This frightful evil is simply the

[1] [The whole subject of infantile sexuality is treated again at greater length in Lectures XX and XXI.]

initial, primitive, infantile part of mental life, which we can find in actual operation in children, but which, in part, we overlook in them on account of their small size, and which in part we do not take seriously since we do not expect any high ethical standard from children. Since dreams regress to this level, they give the appearance of having brought to light the evil in us. But this is a deceptive appearance, by which we have allowed ourselves to be scared. We are not so evil as we were inclined to suppose from the interpretation of dreams.

If these evil impulses in dreams are merely infantile phenomena, a return to the beginnings of our ethical development (since dreams simply make us into children once more in our thoughts and feelings), we need not, if we are reasonable, be ashamed of these evil dreams.[1] But what is reasonable is only a *part* of mental life, a number of other things take place in the mind which are not sensible; and so it happens that we *are* ashamed of these dreams in an unreasonable way. We subject them to the dream-censorship, we are ashamed and angry if, as an exception, one of these wishes succeeds in making its way into consciousness in such an undistorted form that we are obliged to recognize it; indeed we are occasionally as ashamed of a *distorted* dream as if we understood it. Only think of the indignant judgement which the excellent elderly lady passed on her uninterpreted dream of the 'love services' [p. 137]. So the problem is not yet cleared up, and it is still possible that further consideration of the evil in dreams may lead us to form another judgement and arrive at another estimate of human nature. [Cf. p. 338 below.]

As the outcome of our whole enquiry, let us grasp two discoveries, though they only signify the beginning of fresh enigmas and fresh doubts. First, the regression of the dream-work is not only a formal but also a material one. It not only translates our thoughts into a primitive form of expression; but it also revives the characteristics of our primitive mental life—the old dominance of the ego, the initial impulses of our sexual life, and even, indeed, our old intellectual endowment, if symbolic connections may be regarded as such. And secondly, all this, which is old

[1] [The moral responsibility for the content of dreams was the subject of a special discussion by Freud (Section B of 1925*i*), *Standard Ed.*, **19**, 131 ff. Cf. also p. 331 below.]

and infantile and was once dominant and alone dominant, must to-day be ascribed to the unconscious, our ideas of which are now becoming altered and extended. 'Unconscious' is no longer the name of what is latent at the moment; the unconscious is a particular realm of the mind with its own wishful impulses, its own mode of expression and its peculiar mental mechanisms which are not in force elsewhere. But the latent dream-thoughts which we have discovered by interpreting dreams do not belong to this realm; they are on the contrary thoughts just as we might have thought them in waking life. Nevertheless, they are unconscious. How, then, is this contradiction to be solved? We begin to suspect that a distinction is to be drawn here. Something which is derived from our conscious life and shares its characteristics—we call it 'the day's residues'—combines with something else coming from the realm of the unconscious in order to construct a dream. The dream-work is accomplished between these two components. The influence exercised upon the day's residues by the addition of the unconscious is no doubt among the determinants of regression. This is the deepest insight that we can reach here into the essential nature of dreams—and we have investigated further regions of the mind. But the time will soon have come to provide another name for the unconscious character of the latent dream-thoughts in order to distinguish it from the unconscious which comes from the realm of the infantile.[1]

We can, of course, raise another question besides. 'What is it that forces psychical activity during sleep to make this regression? Why does it not dispose of the mental stimuli that disturb sleep without doing this? And if, for the purposes of the dream-censorship, it has to make use of disguise by means of the old and now unintelligible mode of expression, what is the point of reviving as well the old mental impulses, wishes and character-traits, which are superseded to-day—of making use of material regression in addition to the formal kind?' The only answer that could satisfy us would be that in this way alone can a dream be constructed, that it is not otherwise dynamically possible to get rid of the stimulus to the dream. But so far we have no right to give such an answer.

[1] [This question is taken up again at the end of Lecture XIV, p. 227.]

LECTURE XIV

WISH-FULFILMENT

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—Shall I remind you once more of the ground we have covered so far? Of how, when we began applying our technique, we came up against the distortion in dreams, of how we thought we would begin by evading it and obtained our first decisive information on the essential nature of dreams from the dreams of children? Of how, after that, armed with what we had learnt from that enquiry, we made a direct assault on dream-distortion and, as I hope, overcame it step by step? We are bound to admit, however, that the things we have discovered by the one path and by the other do not entirely correspond. It will be our task to piece the two sets of findings together and reconcile them with each other.

We found from both sources that the dream-work consists essentially in the transformation of thoughts into a hallucinatory experience. How this can happen is sufficiently mysterious; but it is a problem of general psychology with which we are not properly concerned here. We learnt from children's dreams that it is the intention of the dream-work to get rid of a mental stimulus, which is disturbing sleep, by means of the fulfilment of a wish. We were unable to say anything similar of distorted dreams till we found out how to interpret them. But it was from the first our expectation that we should be able to regard distorted dreams in the same light as those of children. The first confirmation of this expectation was brought to us by the discovery that in point of fact *all* dreams are children's dreams, that they work with the same infantile material, with the mental impulses and mechanisms of childhood. Now that we believe we have overcome dream-distortion, we must go on to enquire whether the view of dreams as the fulfilment of wishes is also valid of distorted dreams.

A short time ago we submitted a series of dreams to interpretation, but we left wish-fulfilment completely out of account. I feel sure that you must have repeatedly been driven to ask yourselves: 'But where is the wish-fulfilment, which is supposed

to be the aim of the dream-work?' The question is an important one, for it has become the question raised by our lay critics. Human beings, as you know, have an instinctive tendency to fend off intellectual novelties. One of the ways in which this tendency is manifested is by immediately reducing the novelty to the smallest proportions, by compressing it if possible into a single catch-word. 'Wish-fulfilment' has become the catch-word for the new theory of dreams. The layman asks: 'Where is the wish-fulfilment?' And instantly, having heard that dreams are supposed to be wish-fulfilments, and in the very act of asking the question, he answers it with a rejection. He immediately thinks of countless experiences of his own with dreams, in which the dream has been accompanied by feelings ranging from the unpleasurable to severe anxiety, so that the assertion made by the psycho-analytic theory of dreams seems to him most improbable. We have no difficulty in replying that in distorted dreams the wish-fulfilment cannot be obvious but must be looked for, so that it cannot be pointed out until the dream has been interpreted. We know too that the wishes in these distorted dreams are forbidden ones rejected by the censorship whose existence was precisely the cause of the dream's distortion, the reason for the intervention of the dream-censorship. But it is difficult to make the lay critic understand that before a dream has been interpreted one cannot enquire about the fulfilment of its wish. He will keep on forgetting this. His rejection of the theory of wish-fulfilment is actually nothing other than a consequence of the dream-censorship, a substitute for the rejection of the censored dream-wishes and an effluence from it.

We too, of course, feel the need to explain to ourselves why there are so many dreams with a distressing content and, especially why there are anxiety-dreams. Here for the first time we come upon the problem of affects in dreams; it would deserve a monograph of its own, but unfortunately we cannot enter into it. If dreams are the fulfilment of wishes, distressing feelings should be impossible in them. the lay critics would appear to be right there. But three kinds of complications must be taken into account which they have not thought of.

[1] Firstly, it may be that the dream-work has not com-

pletely succeeded in creating a wish-fulfilment; so that a portion of the distressing affect in the dream-thoughts has been left over in the manifest dream. In that case analysis would have to show that these dream-thoughts were far more distressing than the dream constructed out of them. That much can always be proved. If so, we must admit that the dream-work has not achieved its aim any more than the dream of drinking, formed in response to the stimulus of thirst, succeeded in quenching the thirst [p. 133 f.] The dreamer remains thirsty and has to wake up in order to drink. Nevertheless it was a genuine dream, and had lost nothing of a dream's essential nature. We can only say: 'Ut desint vires, tamen est laudanda voluntas.'[1] The intention, at least, which can clearly be recognized, remains praiseworthy. Such instances of failure are no rare event. This is helped by that fact that it is so much harder for the dream-work to alter the sense of a dream's *affects* than of its *content*; affects are sometimes highly resistant. What then happens is that the dream-work transforms the distressing content of the dream-thoughts into the fulfilment of a wish, while the distressing affect persists unaltered. In dreams of this kind the affect is quite inappropriate to the content, and our critics can say that dreams are so far from being wish-fulfilments that even one with a harmless content can be felt as distressing. We can answer this foolish remark by pointing out that it is precisely in dreams like this that the wish-fulfilling purpose of the dream-work appears most clearly, because in isolation. The error arises because those who are unfamiliar with the neuroses picture the link between content and affect as too intimate and therefore cannot imagine the content being altered without a simultaneous alteration of the expression of affect attached to it.[2]

[2] A second factor, which is much more important and far-reaching, but which is equally overlooked by laymen, is the following. No doubt a wish-fulfilment must bring pleasure; but

[1] ['Though the strength is lacking, the will deserves to be praised' (Ovid, *Ep. ex Pont.*, 3, 4, 79).]

[2] [The looseness of the connection between ideas and their accompanying affects had been insisted on by Freud from very early times. See, for instance, his first paper on 'The Neuro-Psychoses of Defence' (1894*a*), *Standard Ed.*, **3**, 51–2.]

the question then arises 'To whom?' To the person who has the wish, of course. But, as we know, a dreamer's relation to his wishes is a quite peculiar one. He repudiates them and censors them—he has no liking for them, in short. So that their fulfilment will give him no pleasure, but just the opposite; and experience shows that this opposite appears in the form of anxiety, a fact which has still to be explained. Thus a dreamer in his relation to his dream-wishes can only be compared to an amalgamation of two separate people who are linked by some strong element in common. Instead of enlarging on this, I will remind you of a familiar fairy tale in which you will find the same situation repeated. A good fairy promised a poor married couple to grant them the fulfilment of their first three wishes. They were delighted, and made up their minds to choose their three wishes carefully. But a smell of sausages being fried in the cottage next door tempted the woman to wish for a couple of them. They were there in a flash; and this was the first wish-fulfilment. But the man was furious, and in his rage wished that the sausages were hanging on his wife's nose. This happened too; and the sausages were not to be dislodged from their new position. This was the second wish-fulfilment; but the wish was the man's, and its fulfilment was most disagreeable for his wife. You know the rest of the story. Since after all they were in fact one man and wife—the third wish was bound to be that the sausages should come away from the woman's nose. This fairy tale might be used in many other connections; but here it serves only to illustrate the possibility that if two people are not at one with each other the fulfilment of a wish of one of them may bring nothing but unpleasure to the other.[1]

It will not be difficult for us now to reach a still better understanding of anxiety-dreams. We will bring up one more observation and then make up our minds to adopt a hypothesis in favour of which there is much to be said. The observation is that anxiety-dreams often have a content entirely devoid of distortion, a content which has, so to speak, evaded the censorship. An anxiety-dream is often the undisguised fulfilment of a

[1] [The whole of this paragraph was later included by Freud as a footnote in the 1919 edition of *I. of D.*, 5, end.] The same fairy tale is also quoted, but in quite a different connection, in Freud's paper on 'The "Uncanny"' (1919), *Standard Ed.*, 17, 240.]

wish—not, of course, of an acceptable wish, but of a repudiated one. The generation of anxiety has taken the place of the censorship. Whereas we can say of an infantile dream that it is the open fulfilment of a permitted wish, and of an ordinary distorted dream that it is the disguised fulfilment of a repressed wish, the only formula which fits an anxiety-dream is that it is the open fulfilment of a repressed wish. The anxiety is a sign that the repressed wish has shown itself stronger than the censorship, that it has put through, or is on the point of putting through, its wish-fulfilment in spite of the censorship. We perceive that what is for it a wish-fulfilment can only be for us, who are on the side of the censorship, an occasion for distressing feelings and for fending the wish off. The anxiety that emerges in the dream is, if you like, anxiety at the strength of these wishes which are normally held down. Why this fending-off appears in the form of anxiety cannot be discovered from the study of dreams alone; anxiety must clearly be studied elsewhere.[1]

We may suppose that what is true of undistorted anxiety-dreams applies also to those which are partly distorted as well as to other unpleasurable dreams, in which the distressing feelings probably correspond to an approach to anxiety. Anxiety-dreams are as a rule also arousal dreams; we usually interrupt our sleep before the repressed wish in the dream has put its fulfilment through completely in spite of the censorship. In that case the function of the dream has failed, but its essential nature is not altered by this. We have compared dreams to the night-watchman or guardian of sleep, who tries to protect our sleep from disturbance [p. 129]. The night-watchman, too, may reach the point of waking the sleeper if he feels he is too weak alone to drive off the disturbance or the danger. Nevertheless we sometimes succeed in holding on to our sleep even when the dream begins to be precarious and to be turning into anxiety. We say to ourselves in our sleep 'after all it's only a dream', and sleep on.

When does it happen that a dream-wish is in a position to overpower the censorship? The condition necessary for this may be fulfilled equally well by the dream-wish or by the dream-censorship. The wish may for an unknown reason be excessively strong on some occasion; but one gets an impression that it is

[1] [It is the subject of Lecture XXV below.]

more often the behaviour of the dream-censorship that is responsible for this displacement of their relative strengths. We have already seen [p. 143] that the censorship acts with varying intensity in each particular case, that it treats each element of a dream with a different degree of severity. We can now add a further hypothesis to the effect that it is in general very variable and does not always employ equal severity to the same objectionable element. If things turn out so that on some occasion it feels itself powerless against a dream-wish which threatens to take it by surprise, instead of distortion, it makes use of its last remaining expedient and abandons the state of sleep, at the same time generating anxiety.

In this connection it strikes us that we are still quite ignorant of why it is that these evil, repudiated wishes become active precisely at night and disturb us during our sleep. The answer is almost bound to lie in some hypothesis going back to the nature of the state of sleep. In day-time the heavy weight of censorship rests on them and as a rule makes it impossible for them to manifest themselves in any activity. At night this censorship, like all the other interests of mental life, is probably withdrawn, or at least greatly reduced, in favour of the single wish to sleep. It is this lowering of the censorship at night that the forbidden wishes have to thank for being able to become active once more. There are some neurotic patients who are unable to sleep and who admit to us that their insomnia was originally intentional. They did not dare to sleep because they were afraid of their dreams — afraid, that is, of the results of the weakening of the censorship. You will easily see, however, that in spite of this the withdrawal of the censorship implies no gross carelessness. The state of sleep paralyses our motive powers. If our evil intentions begin to stir, they can, after all, do nothing more than precisely cause a dream, which is harmless from the practical point of view. It is this soothing consideration that is the basis of the highly sensible remark made by the sleeper — made at night, it is true, but not forming part of dream-life: 'After all it's only a dream. So let us leave it to take its course, and let us sleep on.'

[3] If, in the third place, you will recall our idea that the dreamer fighting against his own wishes is to be compared with

a summation of two separate, though in some way intimately connected, people, you will understand another possibility. For there is a possibility that the fulfilment of a wish may bring about something very far from pleasant—namely, a punishment. Here we can once more use the fairy tale of the three wishes as an illustration. The fried sausages on a plate were the direct fulfilment of the wish of the first person, the woman. The sausages on her nose were the fulfilment of the wish of the second person, the man, but were at the same time a punishment for the woman's foolish wish. (We shall discover in neuroses the motive for the third wish, the last remaining one in the fairy tale.)[1] There are many such punitive trends in the mental life of human beings; they are very powerful, and we may hold them responsible for some of the distressing dreams.[2] Perhaps you will now say that this leaves very little over of the famous wish-fulfilment. But if you look more closely you will admit that you are wrong. Compared with the multiplicity (which I shall mention later) of the things that dreams might be and according to many authorities actually are, our solution—wish-fulfilment, anxiety-fulfilment, punishment-fulfilment—is a very restricted one. We may add that the anxiety is the direct opposite of the wish, that opposites are especially close to one another in associations and that in the unconscious they coalesce [p. 178 ff.]; and further, that the punishment is also the fulfilment of a wish—of the wish of the other, censoring person.

On the whole, therefore, I have made no concession to your objection to the theory of wish-fulfilment. It is our duty, however, to be able to indicate the wish-fulfilment in any distorted dream we may come across, and we shall certainly not evade the task. Let us go back to the dream we have already interpreted of the three bad theatre-tickets for 1 florin 50 [pp. 122 and 139], from which we have already learnt so much. I hope you still recollect it. A lady, whose husband had told her during the day that her friend Elise, who was only three months her junior, had become engaged, dreamt that she was at the theatre with her husband. One side of the stalls was almost empty. Her husband said to her that Elise and her fiancé had wanted

[1] [It is not clear what is intended here.]

[2] [Punishment dreams are discussed in *I. of D.*, **5**, 473–6 and 557–8.]

to go to the theatre too but had not been able to, since they had only got bad seats – three for 1 florin 50. She thought it would not really have done any harm if they had. We found that the dream-thoughts related to her anger at having married so early and to her dissatisfaction with her husband. We may be curious to discover how these gloomy thoughts were transformed into the fulfilment of a wish and where any trace of it is to be found in the manifest content of the dream. We already know that the element 'too early, in a hurry' was eliminated from the dream by the censorship [p. 140]. The empty stalls were an allusion to it. The mysterious 'three for 1 florin 50' now becomes more intelligible to us with the help of the symbolism with which we have meanwhile become acquainted. The '3'[1] really means a man [or husband] and the manifest element is easy to translate: buying a husband with her dowry. ('I could have got one ten[2] times better with my dowry.') 'Marrying' is clearly replaced by 'going to the theatre'. 'Taking the theatre tickets too early' is, indeed, an immediate substitute for 'marrying too early'. This substitution is, however, the work of a wish-fulfilment. Our dreamer was not always so dissatisfied with her early marriage as she was on the day when she received the news of her friend's engagement. She had been proud of it at one time and regarded herself as at an advantage over her friend. Simple-minded girls, after becoming engaged, are reputed often to express their joy that they will soon be able to go to the theatre, to all the plays which have hitherto been prohibited, and will be allowed to see everything. The pleasure in looking, or curiosity, which is revealed in this was no doubt originally a sexual desire to look [scopophilia], directed towards sexual happenings and especially on to the girls' parents, and hence it became a powerful motive for urging them to an early marriage. In this way a visit to the theatre became an obvious substitute, by way of allusion, for being married. Thus the dreamer, in her present anger at her early marriage, harked back to the time at which early marriage was the fulfilment of a wish because it satisfied her scopophilia, and, under the lead of

[1] I have not mentioned another plausible interpretation of this '3' in a childless woman, since this analysis brought up no material in support of it. [Cf. p. 163 f. above.]

[2] [This is presumably a slip for 'a hundred'. Cf. above, p. 124.]

this old wishful impulse, she replaced marriage by going to the theatre.

I cannot be accused of having specially chosen out the most convenient example as evidence of a concealed wish-fulfilment. The procedure would have had to be the same in the case of other distorted dreams. I cannot demonstrate this to you now, and I will only express my conviction that it could always be successfully accomplished. I will, however, dwell a little longer on this theoretical point. Experience has taught me that it is one of those most exposed to attack in the whole theory of dreams, and that many contradictions and misunderstandings arise from it. Apart from this, you may perhaps still be under the impression that I have already withdrawn part of my assertion in saying that a dream is a fulfilled wish or the opposite of one, or a realized anxiety or punishment; and you may think this is an opportunity of forcing further qualifications out of me. I have also been reproached for putting forward things that seem to me obvious in a manner that is too concise and consequently unconvincing.

When someone has accompanied us so far in the interpretation of dreams and has accepted everything that has been brought forward up to this point, it often happens that he comes to a halt at wish-fulfilment and says: 'Granted that dreams always have a sense, and that that sense can be discovered by the technique of psycho-analysis, why must that sense, all evidence to the contrary, be invariably pushed into the formula of wish-fulfilment? Why should not the sense of this nightly thinking be of as many kinds as that of daytime thinking? Why, that is, should not a dream correspond sometimes to a fulfilled wish, sometimes, as you yourself say, to the opposite of that or to a realized fear, but sometimes express an intention, a warning, a reflection with its "pros" and "cons", or a reproach, a scruple of conscience, an attempt at preparing for a coming task, and so on? Why must it always be only a wish, or at most its opposite?'

It might be thought that a difference of opinion on this point is unimportant, if one is agreed on the rest. It is enough, it might be said, that we have discovered the sense of dreams and the way of recognizing it; it is of less importance if we seem

to have defined that sense too narrowly. But that is not so. A misunderstanding on this point affects the essence of our discoveries about dreams and endangers their value for the understanding of the neuroses. Moreover, a compromise of this sort —what is highly thought of in commercial life as being 'accommodating' – is not in place, but detrimental rather, in scientific affairs.

My first answer to the question why dreams should not have a variety of meanings in the sense indicated is as usual in such cases: 'I don't know why they shouldn't. I should have no objection. As far as I'm concerned it could be so. There's only one detail in the way of this broader and more convenient view of dreams – that it isn't so in reality.' My second answer would be that the hypothesis that dreams correspond to a variety of forms of thinking and intellectual operations is not unfamiliar to me myself. I once reported a dream in one of my case histories which appeared on three nights in succession and then no more, and I explained this behaviour by the fact that the dream corresponded to an *intention*, and did not need to be repeated after the intention had been carried out.[1] Later on I published a dream which corresponded to an *admission*.[2] How, then, can I contradict myself and assert that dreams are never anything but a fulfilled wish?

I do it because I will not allow a foolish misunderstanding to pass which may rob us of the fruit of our efforts with dreams —a misunderstanding which confuses the dream with the latent dream-thoughts, and asserts of the former something that applies solely to the latter. For it is quite correct to say that a dream can represent and be replaced by everything you have just enumerated – an intention, a warning, a reflection, a preparation, an attempt at solving a problem, and so on. But if you look properly, you will see that all this only applies to the latent dream-thoughts, which have been transformed into the dream. You learn from interpretations of dreams that people's unconscious thinking is concerned with these intentions, preparations, reflections, and so on, out of which the dream-work then makes the dreams. If at the moment you are not interested

[1] [This was the first dream in the analysis of 'Dora' (1905*e*), *Standard Ed.*, **7**, 64–7.]

[2] [Cf. 'An Evidential Dream' (1913*a*).]

in the dream-work, but are greatly interested in people's unconscious thought-activity, you then eliminate the dream-work and say of the dream what is in practice quite correct—that it corresponds to a warning, an intention, and so on. What often happens in psycho-analytic activity is that our efforts are chiefly directed only to doing away with the dream-form and inserting in the context instead of it the latent thoughts out of which the dream was made.

Thus, quite incidentally, we learn from our examination of the latent dream-thoughts that all these highly complicated mental acts that we have named can take place unconsciously—a discovery as imposing as it is perplexing!

But to go back, you are only correct so long as you are clearly aware that you have used an abbreviated form of expression and so long as you do not believe that the multiplicity you have been describing is to be related to the essential nature of dreams. When you speak of a 'dream', you must mean either the manifest dream—that is, the product of the dream-work—or, at most, the dream-work itself as well—that is, the psychical process which forms the manifest dream out of the latent dream-thoughts. Any other use of the word is a confusion of ideas and can only lead to mischief.[1] If you are making statements about the latent thoughts behind the dream, do so directly and do not obscure the problem of dreams by the loose manner in which you speak. The latent dream-thoughts are the material which the dream-work transforms into the manifest dream. Why should you want to confuse the material with the activity which forms it? If you do, what advantage have you over those who only knew the product of the activity and could not explain where it came from or how it was made?

The only essential thing about dreams is the dream-work that has influenced the thought-material. We have no right to ignore it in our theory, even though we may disregard it in certain practical situations. Analytic observation shows further that the dream-work never restricts itself to translating these thoughts into the archaic or regressive mode of expression that

[1] [Further discussions on the proper use of the term 'dream' will be found in two footnotes added in 1925 and 1914 respectively to *I. of D.*, 506–7 and 579–80, and also at the end of Section I of 'Dreams and Telepathy' (1922*a*), *Standard Ed.*, **18**, 207–8.]

is familiar to you. In addition, it regularly takes possession of something else, which is not part of the latent thoughts of the previous day, but which is the true motive force for the construction of the dream. This indispensable addition is the equally unconscious wish for the fulfilment of which the content of the dream is given its new form. A dream may thus be any sort of thing in so far as you are only taking into account the thoughts it represents – a warning, an intention, a preparation, and so on; but it is always also the fulfilment of an unconscious wish and, if you are considering it as a product of the dream-work, it is only that. A dream is therefore never simply an intention, or a warning, but always an intention, etc., translated into the archaic mode of thought by the help of an unconscious wish and transformed to fulfil that wish. [See p. 227, *n.* 2] The one characteristic, the wish-fulfilment, is the invariable one; the other may vary. It may for its part once more be a wish, in which case the dream will, with the help of an unconscious wish, represent as fulfilled a latent wish of the previous day.

I can understand all this very clearly; but I cannot tell whether I have succeeded in making it intelligible to you as well. And I also have difficulty in proving it to you. That cannot be done without carefully analysing a great many dreams, and on the other hand this most critical and important point in our view of dreams cannot be convincingly represented without referring to what is coming later. It is impossible to suppose that, since everything is intimately interrelated, one can penetrate deeply into the nature of one thing without having concerned oneself with other things of a similar nature. Since we still know nothing of the dream's nearest relatives, neurotic symptoms, we must once more rest content at this point with what we have achieved. I will only give you one more illustrative example and lay before you one fresh consideration.

Let us once again take up the dream we have already so often returned to: the dream of the three theatre-tickets for 1 florin 50. (I can assure you that I originally chose out this example without any special purpose in view.) You know the latent dream-thoughts – anger at having been in such a hurry to get married which arose when she heard the news that her friend had only just become engaged, putting a low value on her husband and

the idea that she might have got a better one if only she had waited. We already know the wish which made a dream out of these thoughts: it was the desire to look, to be able to go to the theatre, most probably an offshoot of her old curiosity to discover at long last what really happens when one is married. This curiosity is, as we know, regularly directed by children towards their parents' sexual life, it is an infantile curiosity, and, so far as it still persists later, an instinctual impulse with roots reaching back into infancy. But the news the dreamer had received during the day gave no occasion for awakening this desire to look, but only for awakening anger and regret. This wishful impulse was not in the first instance connected with the latent dream-thoughts, and we were able to include the outcome of the dream-interpretation in the analysis without taking any account of that impulse. But the anger in itself was not capable of creating a dream. A dream could not arise out of the thoughts that 'it was absurd to marry so early' until they had awakened the old wish to see at long last what happens in marriage. This wish then gave the dream-content its form by replacing marriage by going to the theatre, and the form was that of an earlier wish-fulfilment: 'There! now I may go to the theatre and look at everything that's forbidden, and you mayn't! I'm married and you must wait!' In this way the dreamer's present situation was transformed into its opposite, an old triumph was put in the place of her recent defeat. And, incidentally, a satisfaction of her scopophilia was mixed with a satisfaction of her egoistic competitive sense. This satisfaction then determined the manifest content of the dream, in which the position actually was that she was sitting in the theatre while her friend could not gain admission to it. The portions of the content of the dream behind which the latent dream-thoughts still lay concealed were superimposed on this situation of satisfaction as a misplaced and unintelligible modification of it. The dream's interpretation had to disregard everything that served to represent the wish-fulfilment and to re-establish the distressing latent dream-thoughts from these obscure remaining hints.

The fresh consideration I wish to bring before you is to draw your attention to the latent dream-thoughts which have now

been put in the foreground. I beg you not to forget that in the first place they are unconscious[1] to the dreamer, and secondly that they are completely rational and coherent so that they can be understood as natural reactions to the precipitating cause of the dream, and thirdly that they can be the equivalent of any mental impulse or intellectual operation. I shall now describe these thoughts more strictly than before as the 'day's residues', whether the dreamer confesses to them or not. I shall now distinguish between the day's residues and the latent dream-thoughts, and, in conformity with our earlier usage, I shall designate as latent dream-thoughts everything we learn in interpreting the dream, whereas the day's residues are only a portion of the latent dream-thoughts. Our view is then that something is added to the day's residues, something that was also part of the unconscious, a powerful but repressed wishful impulse; and it is this alone that makes the construction of the dream possible. The influence of this wishful impulse on the day's residues creates the further portion of the latent dream-thoughts—that which need no longer appear rational and intelligible as being derived from waking life.

I have made use of an analogy for the relation of the day's residues to the unconscious wish, and I can only repeat it here. In every undertaking there must be a capitalist who covers the required outlay and an *entrepreneur* who has the idea and knows how to carry it out. In the construction of dreams, the part of the capitalist is always played by the unconscious wish alone; it provides the psychical energy for the construction of the dream. The *entrepreneur* is the day's residues, which decide how this outlay is to be employed. It is possible, of course, for the capitalist himself to have the idea and the expert knowledge or for the *entrepreneur* himself to possess capital. This simplifies the practical situation but makes its theoretical understanding more difficult. In economics the same person is constantly divided into his two aspects of capitalist and *entrepreneur* and this restores the fundamental situation on which our analogy was based. In dream-construction the same variations occur and I will leave them for you to follow out.[2]

[1] [See footnote p. 21 above.]

[2] [This analogy appeared originally in Section C of Chapter VII of *I of D*., S. Ed. 5, 561–2, where it is illustrated at greater length.]

We cannot advance any further here, for you have probably long been disturbed by a doubt which deserves to be given a hearing. 'Are the day's residues,' you will ask, 'really unconscious in the same sense as the unconscious wish which must be added to them in order to make them capable of producing a dream?' Your suspicion is correct. This is the salient point of the whole business. They are *not* unconscious in the same sense. The dream-wish belongs to a different unconscious—to the one which we have already recognized as being of infantile origin and equipped with peculiar mechanisms [p. 210]. It would be highly opportune to distinguish these two kinds of unconscious by different names. But we would prefer to wait till we have become familiar with the field of phenomena of the neuroses. People consider a single unconscious as something fantastic. What will they say when we confess that we cannot make shift without two of them?[1]

Let us break off here. Once again you have only heard something incomplete. But is it not hopeful to reflect that this knowledge has a continuation, which either we ourselves or other people will bring to light? And have not we ourselves learnt enough that is new and surprising?

[1] [The question of the uses of the term 'unconscious' was a crucial one for Freud's theories. He touched on it at several points in the course of these lectures (particularly on pp. 113, 189, 212, 227, 294 ff. and a last brief mention—on p. 437). But he was evidently already feeling uncomfortable about it and in fact revised his views on the whole subject some years later in *The Ego and the Id* (1923*b*). A full account of the problem and its history will be found in the Editor's Introduction to that work, *Standard Ed.*, **19**, 4 ff. The new solution is also explained in Lecture XXXI of the *New Introductory Lectures* (1933*a*).]

[a] [Page 224, line 14 *At the end of this sentence all the German editions have the plural, '*dieser Wünsche* (those wishes)', which would seem to obscure the meaning. An examination of the original manuscript (which is not very clear) appears to show that Freud in fact wrote, or intended to write, the singular, '*dieses Wunsches*' A shorter, though essentially similar, account of the whole process is given in 'An Evidential Dream' (1913*a*), *Standard Ed.*, **12**, 273 ff.]

LECTURE XV

UNCERTAINTIES AND CRITICISMS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—We will nevertheless not leave the field of dreams without dealing with the commonest doubts and uncertainties which our novelties and our theories have given rise to so far. Attentive listeners among you will themselves have collected some of the relevant material.

(1) You may have formed an impression that, even though the technique is correctly carried out, the findings of our interpretative work on dreams admit of so many uncertainties as to defeat any secure translation of the manifest dream into the latent dream-thoughts. You will argue in support of this that in the first place one never knows whether a particular element of the dream is to be understood in its actual sense or as a symbol, since the things employed as symbols do not cease on that account to be themselves. If, however, one has no objective clue for deciding this, the interpretation must at that point be left to the arbitrary choice of the interpreter. Furthermore, as a result of the fact that in the dream-work contraries coalesce, it is always left undetermined whether a particular element is to be understood in a positive or negative sense—as itself or as its contrary [p. 178]. Here is a fresh opportunity for the interpreter to exercise an arbitrary choice. Thirdly, in consequence of the reversals of every kind of which dreams are so fond [p. 180], it is open to the interpreter to carry out a reversal like this in connection with any passage in the dream he chooses. And lastly, you will mention having heard that one is never certain whether the interpretation one has found for a dream is the only possible one. We run the risk of overlooking a perfectly admissible 'over-interpretation' of the same dream [p. 173]. In these circumstances, you will conclude, so much room is left to the interpreter's arbitrary decision as to be incompatible with objective certainty in the findings. Or alternatively you may suppose that the fault does not lie with dreams but that the inadequacies of our dream-

interpretation are to be attributed to errors in our views and premisses.

All your material is unimpeachable, but it does not, I think, justify your conclusions, and in two respects: namely that the interpretation of dreams is, as you insist, at the mercy of arbitrary choice and that the lack of results throws doubts on the correctness of our procedure. If instead of the interpreter's arbitrary choice you would speak of his skill, his experience and his understanding, I should agree with you. We cannot, of course, do without a personal factor of that kind, especially in the more difficult problems of dream-interpretation. But the position is no different in other scientific occupations. There is no means of preventing one person from handling a particular technique worse than another, or one person from making better use of it than another. What in other ways gives an impression of arbitrariness—in, for instance, the interpretation of symbols—is done away with by the fact that as a rule the interconnection between the dream thoughts, or the connection between the dream and the dreamer's life, or the whole psychical situation in which the dream occurs, selects a single one from among the possible determinations presented and dismisses the rest as unserviceable. The conclusion that because of the imperfections of dream-interpretation our hypotheses are incorrect is invalidated by pointing out that on the contrary ambiguity or indefiniteness is a characteristic of dreams which was necessarily to be anticipated.

Let us recall that we have said that the dream-work makes a translation of the dream-thoughts into a primitive mode of expression similar to picture-writing [p. 175 ff.]. All such primitive systems of expression, however, are characterized by indefiniteness and ambiguity of this sort, without justifying us in casting doubts on their serviceability. The coalescence of contraries in the dream-work is, as you know, analogous to the so-called 'antithetical meaning of primal words' in the most ancient languages. Indeed, Abel (1884), the philologist to whom we owe this line of thought, implores us not to suppose that communications made by one person to another with the help of such ambivalent words were on that account ambiguous. On the contrary, intonation and gesture must have made it quite certain in the context of the speech which of the two

contraries the speaker intended to convey. In writing, where gesture is absent, its place was taken by an additional pictograph which was not intended to be spoken — for instance by a picture of a little man, limply squatting or stiffly erect, according to whether the ambiguous hieroglyph '*ken*' was to mean 'weak' or 'strong'. In this way, in spite of the ambiguity of the sounds and signs, misunderstanding was avoided. [Cf. above, p. 179.]

The old systems of expression—for instance, the scripts of the most ancient languages — betray vagueness in a variety of ways which we would not tolerate in our writing to-day. Thus in some Semitic scripts only the consonants in the words are indicated. The reader has to insert the omitted vowels according to his knowledge and the context. The hieroglyphic script behaves very similarly, though not precisely in the same way; and for that reason the pronunciation of Ancient Egyptian remains unknown to us. The sacred script of the Egyptians is indefinite in yet other ways. For instance, it is left to the arbitrary decision of the scribe whether he arranges the pictures from right to left or from left to right. In order to be able to read it one must obey the rule of reading towards the faces of the figures, birds, and so on. But the scribe might also arrange the pictographs in *vertical* columns, and in making inscriptions on comparatively small objects he allowed considerations of decorativeness and space to influence him in altering the sequence of the signs in yet other ways. The most disturbing thing about the hieroglyphic script is, no doubt, that it makes no separation between words. The pictures are placed across the page at equal distances apart; and in general it is impossible to tell whether a sign is still part of the preceding word or forms the beginning of a new word. In Persian cuneiform script, on the other hand, an oblique wedge serves to separate words.

An extremely ancient language and script, which however is still used by four hundred million people, is the Chinese. You must not suppose that I at all understand it; I only obtained some information about it because I hoped to find analogies in it to the indefiniteness of dreams. Nor has my expectation been disappointed. The Chinese language is full of instances of indefiniteness which might fill us with alarm. As is well known, it consists of a number of syllabic sounds, which are spoken either singly or combined into pairs. One of the principal dialects has

some four hundred such sounds. Since, however, the vocabulary of this dialect is reckoned at about four thousand words, it follows that each sound has on an average ten different meanings—some fewer but some correspondingly more. There are quite a number of methods of avoiding ambiguity, since one cannot infer from the context alone which of the ten meanings of the syllabic sound the speaker intends to evoke in the hearer. Among these methods are those of combining two sounds into a compound word and of using four different 'tones' in the pronunciation of the syllables. It is even more interesting from the point of view of our comparison to learn that this language has practically no grammar. It is impossible to tell of any of the monosyllabic words whether it is a noun or a verb or an adjective; and there are no verbal inflections by which one could recognize gender, number, termination, tense or mood. Thus the language consists, one might say, solely of the raw material, just as our thought-language is resolved by the dream-work into its raw material, and any expression of relations is omitted. In Chinese the decision in all cases of indefiniteness is left to the hearer's understanding and this is guided by the context. I have made a note of an example of a Chinese proverb which, literally translated, runs:

'Little what see much what wonderful.'

This is not hard to understand. It may mean: 'The less someone has seen, the more he finds to wonder at'; or: 'There is much to wonder at for him who has seen Little.' There is, of course, no question of distinguishing between these two translations, which only differ grammatically. In spite of this indefiniteness, we have been assured that the Chinese language is a quite excellent vehicle for the expression of thought. So indefiniteness need not necessarily lead to ambiguity.

It must, of course, be admitted that the system of expression by dreams occupies a far more unfavourable position than any of these ancient languages and scripts. For after all they are fundamentally intended for communication: that is to say, they are always, by whatever method and with whatever assistance, meant to be understood. But precisely this characteristic is absent in dreams. A dream does not want to say anything to anyone. It is not a vehicle for communication; on the contrary, it is meant to remain ununderstood. For that reason we must

not be surprised or at a loss if it turns out that a number of ambiguities and obscurities in dreams remain undecided. The one certain gain we have derived from our comparison is the discovery that these points of uncertainty which people have tried to use as objections to the soundness of our dream-interpretations are on the contrary regular characteristics of all primitive systems of expression.

The question of how far the intelligibility of dreams in fact extends can only be answered by practice and experience.[1] Very far, I believe; and my view is confirmed if we compare the results produced by correctly trained analysts. The lay public, including the scientific lay public, are well known to enjoy making a parade of scepticism when faced by the difficulties and uncertainties of a scientific achievement. I think they are wrong in this. You are perhaps not all aware that a similar situation arose in the history of the deciphering of the Babylonian Assyrian inscriptions. There was a time when public opinion was very much inclined to regard the decipherers of cuneiform as visionaries and the whole of their researches as a 'swindle'. But in 1857 the Royal Asiatic Society made a decisive experiment. It requested four of the most highly respected experts in cuneiform, Rawlinson, Hincks, Fox Talbot and Oppert, to send it, in sealed envelopes, independent translations of a newly discovered inscription; and, after a comparison between the four productions, it was able to announce that the agreement between these experts went far enough to justify a belief in what had so far been achieved and confidence in further advances. The derision on the part of the learned lay world gradually diminished after this, and since then certainty in reading cuneiform documents has increased enormously.

(2) A second group of doubts is closely connected with the impression, which no doubt you yourselves have not escaped, that a number of the solutions to which we find ourselves driven in interpreting dreams seem to be forced, artificial, dragged in by the hair of their head—arbitrary, that is, or even comic and facetious. Remarks to this effect are so frequent that

[1] [Cf a later paper on 'The Limits to the Possibility of Interpretation', Section A of 'Some Additional Notes on Dream-Interpretation as a Whole' (1925*i*).]

I will choose at random the last that has been reported to me. So listen to this. In free Switzerland the head of a training-college was recently removed from his post on account of his interest in psycho-analysis. He entered a protest, and a Berne newspaper published the report of the school authorities on his appeal. I will select a few sentences dealing with psycho-analysis from this document: 'Moreover we are surprised at the far-fetched and artificial character of many of the examples, which are also to be found in the volume by Dr. Pfister of Zurich which is quoted. . . . It is really surprising, therefore, that the head of a training-college should accept all these assertions and pretended proofs without criticism.' These sentences are represented as a decision reached by someone 'making a calm judgement'. It is rather this calmness, I think, which is 'artificial'. Let us examine these remarks more closely, in the expectation that a little reflection and a little expert knowledge can be of no disadvantage even to a calm judgement.

It is truly refreshing to see how swiftly and unerringly a person can arrive at a judgement on some delicate problem of depth-psychology after his first impression of it. The interpretations seem to him far-fetched and forced and he does not like them, so they are false and all this business of interpretation is worthless. Not even a fleeting thought is given to the other possibility that there are good reasons why these interpretations are bound to have this appearance; after which the further question would follow of what these good reasons are.

The matter under consideration relates in essence to the results of displacement, which you have become acquainted with as the most powerful instrument of the dream-censorship. With the help of displacement the dream-censorship creates substitutive structures which we have described as allusions. But they are allusions which are not easily recognizable as such, from which the path back to the genuine thing is not easily traced, and which are connected with the genuine thing by the strangest, most unusual, external associations.[1] In all these cases it is a question, however, of things which are *meant* to be hidden, which are condemned to concealment, for that is what the dream-censorship is aiming at. But we must not expect that a

[1] [See footnote 1, p. 174 above.]

thing which has been hidden will be found in its own place, in its proper position. The frontier-control commissions which are operating to-day are more cunning in this respect than the Swiss school authorities. In their search for documents and plans they are not content with examining brief-cases and portfolios, but they consider the possibility that spies and smugglers may have these forbidden things in the most secret portions of their clothing where they decidedly do not belong — for instance, between the double soles of their boots. If the hidden things are there, it will certainly be possible to call them 'far-fetched', but it is also true that a great deal will have been found.[1]

If we recognize that the links between a latent dream-element and its manifest substitute can be of the most out-of-the-way and peculiar nature, sometimes appearing comic and sometimes resembling a joke, we are basing ourselves on copious experience of examples which, as a rule, we have not solved ourselves. It is often impossible to give such interpretations on our own account, no sensible person could guess at the connection. The dreamer gives us the translation either all at once by a direct association — *he* is able to, since it was he who produced the substitute—or else he brings up so much material that the solution no longer calls for any particular acumen, but presents itself, so to speak, as a matter of course. If the dreamer fails to assist in one or other of these two ways, the manifest element in question will for ever remain unintelligible to us. I will, if I may, give you an example which occurred to me recently. One of my women patients lost her father in the course of the treatment. Since then she has taken every opportunity of bringing him to life in her dreams. In one of these her father appeared (in a particular connection of no further relevance) and said '*It's a quarter past eleven, it's half-past eleven, it's a quarter to twelve.*' By way of interpretation of this oddity all that occurred to her was that her father liked his grown-up children to appear punctually at the family meals. No doubt this was connected with the dream-element, but it threw no light on its origin. There was a suspicion, based on the immediate situation in the treatment, that a carefully suppressed critical revolt against her beloved and honoured father played some part in the dream. In the further course of her associations, apparently remote

[1] [There is some untranslatable punning here in the original.]

from the dream, she told how the day before there had been a lot of talk about psychology in her presence, and a relative of hers had remarked, 'The *Urmensch* [primal man] survives in all of us.' This seemed to provide us with the explanation. It had given her an excellent opportunity of bringing her dead father to life once again. She made him in the dream into an '*Uhrmensch*' ['clock-man'] by making him announce the quarter-hours at midday.

You will not be able to escape the resemblance of this example to a joke; and it has in fact often happened that a joke of the dreamer's has been regarded as a joke of the interpreter's. There are other instances in which it has been far from easy to decide whether what we are dealing with is a joke or a dream. But you will recall that the same doubt arose in the case of some parapraxes—slips of the tongue [p. 43 f.]. A man reported as a dream of his that his uncle had given him a kiss while they were sitting in his *auto*(mobile).[1] He himself very quickly added the interpretation: it meant '*auto-erotism*' (a term from the theory of the libido, indicating satisfaction obtained without any outside object). Had the man set out, then, to have some fun with us and was he passing off a joke that had occurred to him as a dream? I think not, I believe he really dreamt it. But what is the origin of this puzzling similarity? This question once led me temporarily aside from my path by compelling me to make jokes themselves the subject of a detailed investigation.[2] It was there shown how jokes originate: a preconscious[3] train of thought is abandoned for a moment to be worked over in the unconscious, and from this it emerges as a joke. Under the influence of the unconscious it is subjected to the effects of the mechanisms that hold sway there—condensation and displacement—the same processes that we have found concerned in the dream-work; and it is to this common feature that is to be ascribed the similarity, when it occurs, between jokes and dreams. But the unintended 'dream-joke' brings none of the

[1] [This dream is reported in *I. of D.*, 5, 408 9.]

[2] [*Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious* (1905*c*). Freud relates in *I. of D.*, 4, 297 8 *n.*, how he was led into writing that work by a critic (Wilhelm Fliess) who complained that the dreams he reported were too full of jokes. See also a passage on this point in the book on jokes itself (*Standard Ed.*, 8, 173).]

[3] [This term is explained in Lecture XIX, p. 296 below.]

yield of pleasure of a true joke. You can learn why if you go more deeply into the study of jokes. A 'dream-joke' strikes us as a bad joke; it does not make us laugh, it leaves us cold [1]

In this, however, we are treading in the footsteps of the dream-interpretation of antiquity, which, along with much that is unserviceable, has left us some good examples of dream-interpretation, which we ourselves could not better. I will repeat to you a dream which was of historic importance and which is reported of Alexander the Great, with slight variations, by Plutarch and Artemidorus of Daldis [cf. p. 86 above]. When the king was laying siege to the obstinately defended city of Tyre (332 B.C.), he once dreamt that he saw a dancing satyr. Aristander, the dream-interpreter, who was present with the army, interpreted the dream by dividing the word '*Satyros*' into σὰ Τύρος [sa Turos] (thine is Tyre), and therefore promised that he would triumph over the city. Alexander was led by this interpretation to continue the siege and eventually captured Tyre. The interpretation, which has a sufficiently artificial appearance, was undoubtedly the right one.[2]

[3] I can well imagine that you will be especially impressed when you hear that objections to our view of dreams have even been made by people who have themselves, as psycho-analysts, been engaged for a considerable time in interpreting dreams. It would have been too much to expect that such an abundant encouragement to fresh errors as this theory offers should have been neglected; and so, as a result of conceptual confusions and unjustified generalizations, assertions have been made which are not far behind the medical view of dreams in their incorrectness. You know one of them already. It tells us that dreams are concerned with attempts at adaptation to present conditions and with attempts at solving future problems – that they have a 'prospective purpose' (Maeder [1912]). We have already shown [p. 222] that this assertion is based on a confusion between the dream and the latent dream-thoughts and is therefore based on disregarding the dream-work. As a characteriza-

[1] [See Chapter VI of the book on jokes, and in particular *Standard Ed.*, 8, 173 and 179–80. The point has already been mentioned above on p. 174.]

[2] [This is also reported in *I. of D.*, 4, 99 *n.*]

tion of the unconscious intellectual activity of which the latent dream-thoughts form part, it is on the one hand no novelty and on the other not exhaustive, since unconscious intellectual activity is occupied with many other things besides preparing for the future.[1] A far worse confusion seems to underlie the assurance that the idea of death will be found behind every dream [Stekel, 1911, 34]. I am not clear exactly what is meant by this formula. But I suspect that it conceals a confusion between the dream and the dreamer's whole personality. [Cf. *I. of D.*, 5, 397.]

An unjustifiable generalization, based on a few good examples, is involved in the statement that every dream allows of two interpretations—one which agrees with our account, a 'psycho-analytic' one, and another, an 'anagogic' one, which disregards the instinctual impulses and aims at representing the higher functions of the mind (Silberer [1914]).[2] There are dreams of this kind, but you will try in vain to extend this view even to a majority of dreams. Again, after all that I have said to you, you will find quite incomprehensible an assertion that all dreams are to be interpreted bisexually, as a confluence of two currents described as a masculine and a feminine one (Adler [1910]). [Cf. *I. of D.*, 5, 397.] There are, of course, a few dreams of this kind too; and you may learn later that they are constructed like certain hysterical symptoms. The reason why I have mentioned all these discoveries of fresh universal characteristics of dreams is in order to warn you against them or at least to leave you in no doubt as to what I think of them.

(4) One day the objective value of research into dreams seemed to be put in question by an observation that patients under analytic treatment arrange the content of their dreams in accordance with the favourite theories of their physicians—some dreaming predominantly of sexual instinctual impulses, others of the struggle for power and yet others even of

[1] [This theory of Maeder's was dealt with at length by Freud in two footnotes to *I. of D.*, 5, 506–7 and 579–80.]

[2] [This was fully discussed in *I. of D.*, 5, 523–4, as well as in 'Dreams and Telepathy' (1922*a*), *Standard Ed.*, 18, 216 and in a footnote to 'A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams' (1917*d*), ibid., 14, 228.]

rebirth (Stekel). The weight of this observation was, however, diminished by the reflection that human beings had dreams before there was any psycho-analytic treatment which could give those dreams a direction, and that people who are now under treatment used also to dream during the period before the treatment started. What was true about this novelty could soon be seen to be self-evident and of no relevance to the theory of dreams. The day's residues which instigate dreams are left over from powerful interests in waking life. When the remarks made by the physician and the hints he gives become of significance to the patient, they enter the circle of the day's residues and can provide psychical stimuli for the construction of dreams like any other emotionally coloured interests of the previous day which have not been dealt with, and they then operate like somatic stimuli which impinge on the sleeper during his sleep. The trains of thought set going by the physician can, like these other instigators of dreams, appear in the manifest content of a dream or be discovered in its latent content. Indeed, we know that a dream can be experimentally produced, or, to put it more correctly, a part of the dream-material can be introduced into the dream. In producing these effects on his patients, an analyst is thus playing a part no different from an experimenter who, like Mourly Vold, gives particular postures to the limbs of the subjects of his experiments. [Cf. p. 87 above.]

It is often possible to influence dreamers as to what they shall dream *about*, but never as to *what* they shall dream. The mechanism of the dream-work and the unconscious dream-wish are exempt from any outside influence. In considering dreams with a somatic stimulus, we have already found [p. 90 f.] that the characteristic nature and independence of dream-life are shown in the reaction with which dreams respond to the somatic or mental stimuli that are brought to bear. The thesis which we have been discussing, and which seeks to throw doubt on the objectivity of research into dreams, is thus once again based on a confusion—this time between the dream and the dream-material.[1]

[1] [For a further discussion of this, see Section VII of 'Remarks on the Theory and Practice of Dream-Interpretation' (1923), *Standard Ed.*, **19**, 113 ff.]

This then, Ladies and Gentlemen, is what I wanted to tell you about the problems of dreams. As you will guess, there is much that I have had to pass over, and you will have been aware that on almost every point what I have said has necessarily been incomplete. That, however, is due to the connection between the phenomena of dreaming and those of the neuroses. We have studied dreams as an introduction to the theory of the neuroses, and this was certainly a more correct procedure than if we had done the opposite. But just as dreams prepare the way to an understanding of the neuroses, so, on the other hand, a true appreciation of dreams can only be achieved after a knowledge of neurotic phenomena.[1]

I cannot tell what you will think of it, but I must assure you that I do not regret having claimed so much of your interest and of the time available to us for the problems of dreams. There is nothing else from which one can so quickly arrive at a conviction of the correctness of the theses by which psychoanalysis stands or falls. Exacting work over many months and even years is called for to show that the symptoms of a case of neurotic illness have a sense, serve a purpose and arise out of the patient's experiences in life. On the other hand, only a few hours' effort may be enough to prove that the same thing is true of a dream which is, to start with, confused to the point of being unintelligible, and thus to confirm all the premisses of psycho-analysis—the unconscious nature of mental processes, the peculiar mechanisms which they obey and the instinctual forces which are expressed in them. And when we bear in mind the sweeping analogy between the structure of dreams and that of neurotic symptoms and at the same time consider the rapidity of the transformation which makes a dreamer into a waking and reasonable man, we arrive at a certainty that neuroses too are based only on an alteration in the play of forces between the powers of mental life.[2]

[1] [There is a reference back to dreams near the end of the last lecture of the present series, p. 456 below.]

[2] [Freud dealt with the subject of dreams again in the first of his *New Introductory Lectures* (1933*a*), Lecture XXIX.]

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